The Philosophy of the Commentators, 200-600 AD

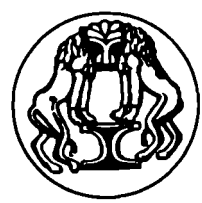
400 YEARS OF TRANSITION

The Philosophy of the Commentators, 200-600 AD

A SOURCEBOOK

Volume 1. Psychology (with Ethics and Religion)

Richard Sorabji



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Sources

Many of the translations in this Sourcebook are new. Reprinted translations have been subject to revision, largely to harmonise choice of editions and of certain English terminology. They are mostly taken from the series *The Ancient Commentators on Aristotle*, ed. Richard Sorabji (Duckworth and Cornell University Press, 1987-).

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Harold Tarrant, *Thrasyllan Platonism*, Cornell University Press, © 1993 by Cornell University, translation of extract from Porphyry's *Commentary on Ptolemy's Harmonics*, used by permission of the publisher.

Shlomo Pines, 'An Arabic summary of a lost work of John Philoponus', *Israel Oriental Studies* 2, 1972, extract from pp. 320-52.

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John Dillon, *Alcinous, The Handbook of Platonism*, Oxford University Press 1993, © John Dillon 1993, six extracts.

Theo Ebert, 'Aristotelian accidents', *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 16, 1998, 133-59, translation of extract from Porphyry *Isagoge*, © Theo Ebert.

Jonathan Barnes, 'Ammonius and adverbs', *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy,* supp. vol. 1991, ed. Henry Blumenthal and Howard Robinson, *Aristotle and the Later Tradition*, extract from Ammonius *in An. Pr.*

Jonathan Barnes, 'Peripatetic negations', *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 4, 1986, 201-14, extract from Alexander *in An. Pr.*

R.W. Sharples, *Cicero On Fate & Boethius The Consolation of Philosophy IV5-7, V*, Aris & Phillips, Warminster, 1991, © R.W. Sharples 1991.

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Stephen Menn, *Descartes and Augustine*, © Cambridge University Press 1998, translated extract from Simplicius *in Cael.*

D.N. Sedley, ' "Becoming like God" in the *Timaeus* and Aristotle', in Tomas Calvo, Luc Brisson, eds, *Interpreting the Timaeus-Critias*, Academia Verlag, Sankt Augustin, 1997, extract from Plato *Timaeus*, with the permission of the publisher.

R.W. Sharples, 'Science, philosophy and human life in the ancient world', in M.W.F. Stone, Jonathan Wolff, eds, *The Proper Ambition of Science, London Studies in the History of Philosophy* 2, Routledge, London 2000, 7-27, extract translated from Galen *Quod animi mores.*

Lawrence P. Schrenk, 'Proof and discovery in Aristotle and the later Greek tradition', in his (ed.) *Aristotle in Late Antiquity*, © 1994, The Catholic University of America Press, pp. 103 and 105, extract translated from David [Elias] *in Isag.*, and extract from Philoponus *in An. Post.*

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Preface and Acknowledgements

In 1996, the British Academy advertised a Research Chair in the Humanities and Social Sciences, the vacated half of one of the first two such chairs which had been donated by Lord Wolfson. It was to begin on 1 October 1996, the day after I finished a five-year term at the Institute of Classical Studies, and I was fortunate enough to be awarded it. Without this two-and-a-half year break, I would not have undertaken the Sourcebook.

The work was done in phases.

Phase 1: The initial phase involved preparing the first draft of the Sourcebook in time for a week-long international workshop held at the Institute of Classical Studies in the University of London in June 1997, and financed by the Institute and the University's School of Advanced Study, of which the Institute is a member. Some forty younger scholars attended from all over the world, in order to gain acquaintance with the Philosophy of the Ancient Commentators from the period 200 to 600 AD. The first draft was on the table and was also used by some of the speakers in preparing handouts.

In order to prepare the first draft, I selected topics and illustrative texts, in very much the format of the final version, adding brief introductory headings. Of my research assistants at that time, the work of typing up the available translations was started by Dolores Iorizzo, and then taken over by Sylvia Berryman, with a team of graduate students. It was a mammoth task to deliver the three draft volumes a week before the workshop.

The nineteen speakers at the workshop, in some cases, added their own handouts. They were: Sylvia Berryman, Victor Caston, Gillian Clark, John Ellis, Andrea Falcon, Barrie Fleet, Frans de Haas, Pamela Huby, Jill Kraye, Peter Lautner, Eric Lewis, Arthur Madigan, Mario Mignucci, Sara Rappe, David Sedley, Robert Sharples, Anne Sheppard, Lucas Siorvanes, and Richard Sorabji.

Phase 2: The main recommendation of the workshop participants was that I should add more explanatory narrative. This process led to the addition and subtraction of texts. Furthermore, only the minority of texts selected had been translated in our series, *The Ancient Commentators on Aristotle*, especially as the series was still at a comparatively early stage. So new translations needed to be commissioned, or translated by me when a translator was unavailable.

Phase 3: The resulting second draft was sent out for comment at the end of Summer 1999 to teams of specialists, to whom I am extremely grateful. The *Psychology* volume and the last part of the *Logic and Metaphysics* volume were reviewed by a team of scholars at the Institute of

Philosophy in Leuven: Jan Opsomer (organiser), Gerd van Riel and Guy Guldentops. The *Physics* volume was reviewed by such a team at Utrecht: Frans de Haas (organiser), Keimpe Algra and Peter Wieringa, with a further section undertaken by David Furley. For the *Logic and Metaphysics* volume, the translations concerning Aristotle's *Categories* were reviewed by Gary Matthews and Marc Cohen, the others by Richard McKirahan. The whole volume was reviewed, especially for content, by Jonathan Barnes, with one section undertaken by Angela Longo, and John Dillon gave me his *nihil obstat*.

The main conclusion from this review was that the translations by many hands would need more harmonisation. In the process of harmonising, I also substituted some interpretations of my own, so that the final versions are rather *based on* the work of the translators. I am very grateful to the translators for their work and I apologise for the alterations. Names and initials of translators are recorded at the end of the volume. All translators will have had the opportunity to remain anonymous, if they found the alterations too irksome. Almost no translations remain in their original form, even though the changes have been kept to a minimum. In a few cases previously published translations have been used, or used as a basis, and I thank the publishers and copyright holders listed in the Sources for granting permissions.

I learnt much more from the valuable comments of the expert reviewers, and it was only at this stage of pulling the selections more tightly together, that I began to feel I had a picture of the philosophy as a coherent whole. I hope that the reader may share some of this experience, finding their own interconnections and contrasts when they read the texts side by side.

The complex revisions of the volumes were typed up and set in order by two research assistants with a remarkable ability to keep a grasp of details. David Robertson took responsibility for the *Physics* and *Psychology* volumes, Eleni Vambouli for the *Logic and Metaphysics* volume. Ian Crystal finished off some of the work on *Psychology* and Jennifer Strickland inserted final corrections with electronic supervision by Han Baltussen.

Phase 4: The third draft was sent to the publisher for further review in October 2000, and the draft also benefited from classes based on the Sourcebook at the University of London in 1999-2000, and at The University of Texas at Austin in March to May 2001 and 2002.

Phase 5: In a fifth phase of checking for accuracy, I have been enormously helped by the watchful eye of Devin Henry, and also by readings on the part of my colleague at King's, Peter Adamson, and by Cosmin Andron, Jan Opsomer, Guy Medigon, David Furley and Andrea Falcon, and at proof-reading stage, John Sellars.

I should like to thank my colleagues in the University of London for the ease with which they accepted the proposal in the late 1970s that the nine hundred years after Aristotle should be included in the undergraduate syllabus. The only question I was asked was whether the Neoplatonists

after Plotinus would provide enough material. The Sourcebook is part of the answer.

The Sourcebook would not have been possible without the funding of the translations in the series *Ancient Commentators on Aristotle*, of which there are now over fifty volumes. For this I wish to thank the following: the National Endowment for the Humanities, Division of Research Programs, an independent federal agency of the USA, the Leverhulme Trust, the British Academy, the Jowett Copyright Trustees, the Royal Society (UK), Centro Internazionale A. Beltrame di Storia dello Spazio e del Tempo (Padua), Mario Mignucci, Liverpool University, the Leventis Foundation, the Arts and Humanities Research Board of the British Academy, the Esmée Fairbairn Charitable Trust, the Henri Brown Trust, Mr and Mrs Egon, and the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO/GW). A special grant towards the Sourcebook was provided by the Gresham Trust, to which I am very grateful.

It is hoped that the Sourcebook and the volumes of translation will complement each other. The published translations will provide extra annotation on content and text for some (not all) of the passages in the Sourcebook, while the Sourcebook will explain ideas touched on, sometimes briefly, in the published translations. Translations in the series are listed at the end of the volume.

Introduction

The Philosophy of the Commentators of 200-600 AD constitutes the transition from Ancient to Medieval Philosophy. The period started with the Aristotelian (Peripatetic) School battling against Stoics and Platonists. But soon Neoplatonism became dominant, swallowing up the other schools, while still displaying their influence, especially that of the Aristotelian, Alexander of Aphrodisias. He, like most of the others, did much of his own Philosophy through the medium of commentary on earlier Philosophy, and that is why the Greek philosophers of this period can be called commentators. Alexander's commentaries, and most but not all of the surviving ones, are on Aristotle.

Meanwhile, the balance of power shifted from Paganism to Christianity. The two sides stood in a love-hate relationship, which can sometimes be glimpsed in the commentaries. The theology and spirituality of Neoplatonism profoundly influenced Christian Philosophy. And so did the inward turn to find truth within oneself, started by the Stoics and developed by the Neoplatonists.

Neoplatonist Philosophy, which somehow used and harmonised the warring Greek schools of the past, proved very congenial to the Philosophy of at least two religious cultures, first that of medieval Islam from the ninth century to the end of the twelfth, and then that of medieval Latin-speaking Christianity from the late twelfth century onwards. If we skip from Plato and Aristotle to Descartes two thousand years later, or to Thomas Aquinas 1600 years later, we shall not understand the later thinkers, because they were influenced by what came in between. Thomas was avidly reading the commentators who had been and were being translated into Latin and was seeing Aristotle through their lenses.

The commentators were not only a source of influence for posterity. Their commentaries also provide a panorama of up to a thousand years of earlier Greek Philosophy, and they embed fragments of that Philosophy otherwise lost. Some of the commentaries represent classroom lectures and provide the historian with fresh light on teaching methods. They also contain Philosophy of very considerable interest in its own right. The Sourcebook will present the commentators' own philosophical ideas rather than presenting them just as commentators. They include much to stimulate modern philosophy students, arguments about determinism, or the beginning of the universe, for example. The ancient commentaries on Aristotle's *Categories* force the reader to think Aristotle's philosophy through to a level unmatched by modern discussion.

Now that there are over fifty volumes of English translation available

in the series *The Ancient Commentators on Aristotle*, it is becoming easier to identify previously unidentified writings as fragments of lost commentary, or as translations, especially into Arabic, of lost bits of commentary. Thanks to valuable discoveries by others, the available corpus is beginning to grow a little.

To return to the influence of the commentators, they are essential for understanding Medieval Latin Philosophy, since the Neoplatonist Commentators turned Aristotle's God into a Creator and endowed his human soul with immortality. Their motive was to defend the harmony of Plato and Aristotle against Christian charges of inconsistency. By an irony, this harmonisation finished up by making Aristotle safe for Christianity in the thirteenth century, when William of Moerbeke was showing his Latin translations of the commentators to Thomas Aquinas.

The commentators are also the source of major ideas previously thought to have been invented in the thirteenth- or fourteenth-century Latin West: the idea of impetus theory, hailed by Thomas Kuhn as a fourteenth-century scientific revolution, and the idea of intentionality which, in the nineteenth century, Brentano claimed to take from Thomas Aquinas' medieval followers and which he made a centrepiece of modern Philosophy of Mind. Galileo's early works mention the commentator Philoponus more often than they mention Plato. There will be fresh examples in this Sourcebook of medieval ideas deriving from the ancient commentators, for example the idea of latitude of forms in the *Physics* volume. Thus the commentators represent a missing link in the history of Western Philosophy.

The need for this sourcebook

The ancient Greek commentaries on Aristotle, edited by H. Diels for the Prussian Academy a hundred years ago, amount to some 15,000 pages. The present Sourcebook, as will be explained shortly, will go beyond the commentaries to other works by the commentators. So the relevant corpus is vast. In Diels' Germany such was the standard of Greek learning that H. Usener could review the massive series halfway through and K. Praechter when it was nearly complete.[1] But in the First World War, many of the next generation of potential Greek readers shot each other dead. Even with the fifty or more volumes now translated into English, it takes an expert to know which will be the volumes particularly relevant to his or her interests. Hence the need for a Sourcebook, to make the commentators accessible to the much wider readership which could find them interesting.

The selection

The commentators also wrote non-commentary works, and the Sourcebook draws equally on these since the two kinds of work throw light on each other. In addition, besides the Greek commentaries edited by Diels, there are commentaries lost in the original Greek, but surviving in other lan-

guages, especially often Arabic, Hebrew, or Latin. Where the surviving version has passed through one or more than one language, the task of retroversion to work out the original Greek is especially difficult. Translations of some of these texts will be included in our selections.

The commentators wrote commentaries on Plato, but the surviving corpus is incomparably smaller and had already been partly translated.[2] But there are plans for a new English translation of the important commentary by Proclus on Plato's *Timaeus* by Harold Tarrant, Dirk Baltzly and David Runia, and for a new French edition and translation of the same by Jan Opsomer. There will also be translations of other commentaries on Plato, including, it is hoped, Proclus *in Crat.*, in the series *Ancient Commentators on Aristotle*, and a good number of the commentaries on Plato are represented in the Sourcebook.

The Neoplatonist commentators often find the start of a problem in Plato. But because Plato wrote dialogues, he tends to put into the mouths of his characters many different suggestions, without seeking any unifying solution across his works. The Neoplatonists, however, thought Plato was conveying a solution, and so not surprisingly they were able to disagree on what the solution was. Aristotle was the very opposite of Plato. He strives for consistency across his works. Moreover, unlike Plato, he is not content to raise problems and explore them, but endeavours to find definitive solutions. It is for different reasons, then, that the commentators disagree on what Aristotle thought, not least because of the preposterous, but fruitful, Neoplatonist idea, to which I shall return, that Plato and Aristotle were in basic agreement.

A further major influence on all the commentators was Stoicism. Alexander and the Neoplatonists alike had to oppose or incorporate Stoic ideas.

The Sourcebook is not intended to be an introduction to Neoplatonism, both because Aristotelians (also known as Peripatetics) and Christians are to be covered as well, and because under the Neoplatonists the commentaries on Aristotle formed the introductory part of the student philosophy syllabus. Matters of higher theology were not so likely to be treated here as in the commentaries on Plato, especially on his *Timaeus* and *Parmenides*, which formed a later part of the syllabus, or in non-commentary treatises. Although these texts will also be quoted, the emphasis will be more on philosophy than on theology.

In selecting what will interest readers, one has to be guided by current biases. A hundred years ago, when Idealist philosophies were very popular in English-speaking countries, much more of Neoplatonism would have seemed obviously relevant. The central doctrines of Neoplatonism will appear here, but divided up among different philosophical topics. Someone seeking to introduce Neoplatonism might put in the forefront Plotinus 4.8 [6] 1, his personal experience of how soul relates to Intellect, 4.8 [6] 8, his personal hypothesis on our undescended soul, 5.3 [49] 1; 10-13 on why we need to believe there is a One as well as Soul and Intellect, and 5.1 [10] 10, summarising these three realities. All those ideas will appear. But just as

the ancient enterprise of commenting on Aristotle imposed an Aristotelian order on what the Neoplatonists said, so analogously with this modern Sourcebook. The topics and sub-topics chosen represent partly ancient and partly modern interests. The central ideas of Neoplatonism will appear, but I shall approach them from the direction, currently more familiar, of Aristotle's interests.

The organisation will be by topics and sub-topics, with concepts explained only so far as necessary for a first understanding. The topics are grouped into three volumes, corresponding to Psychology (with Ethics and Religious Practice), Physics, and Logic and Metaphysics.

One surprise in preparing the Sourcebook has been finding how often it seemed necessary to quote someone who is not nowadays thought of as a commentator at all, Plotinus. The commentators mention Plotinus chiefly for those few issues on which they disagree with him, but otherwise tend to leave him in silence. Yet often, it turns out, Plotinus is the only extant source which explains the background ideas that the Neoplatonist commentators were discussing. This might not be so true if more had survived of the commentaries of his pupil and editor, Porphyry. It may seem very much to distort Plotinus to chop his discussion into little bits for a Sourcebook. For he is a philosopher who excels in wrestling at length with a problem, seeing new objections, and new analogies to answer them. How can he be represented by snippets? Yet Plotinus describes himself as merely a commentator on Plato's words, when he explains the three fundamental levels of reality, 5.1 [10] 8 (12). And it has been remarked that later commentators treat Plotinus as just one among other commentators on Aristotle, e.g. 'Philoponus' *in DA* 535,8-12; Simplicius *in Cat.* 2,3-5; Simplicius *in Phys.* 706,25-8; 769,6ff.; 791,27ff.[3] So if treating him as a commentator is a distortion, it is an old distortion, and one he sometimes invited.

A bigger surprise awaited me when I read the selected texts assembled for the first time side by side. The selection was made out of interest in the individual topics. But read side by side, the texts revealed themes and concepts running through disparate texts. Not only these agreements, but also disagreements became more obvious. There are disagreements within a school and agreements between schools. Again, as regards the Neoplatonists a hierarchy among the chosen subjects became apparent, with Psychology at the summit, as we shall see, influencing the treatment of Physics, Logic and Metaphysics. It became necessary to begin harmonising the translations by different hands, to bring out the common themes and concepts. And it became possible to start rewriting the narrative, to show the interrelations and contrasts within the bigger picture. These processes could last a lifetime. But it seemed more useful to invite readers to join in the process themselves. I believe that readers will find their own interconnexions and contrasts when they read the texts side by side.

I hope the assembly of materials will facilitate much better interpretations of the texts. Certainly, the interpretations provided or implied by the

selections here should not be regarded as final, even if there were such a thing as a final interpretation. And this brings me to what the Sourcebook cannot do.

What the Sourcebook can and cannot do

I have already said that the Sourcebook is not a general introduction to Neoplatonism. It also faces the opposite problem from that tackled in the admirable Sourcebook for an earlier period, A.A. Long and D.N. Sedley, *The Hellenistic Philosophers*. Instead of there being too little material surviving, there is too much. Thus it cannot treat in depth every topic raised, nor cover every topic. It is meant to offer not the last word, but a first assembling of texts, to make them accessible, so that others can make new discoveries, offer new interpretations and fill gaps.

Another thing which the Sourcebook does not aim to do is to establish a canon of texts. That would be most undesirable. It is an introduction, a way of first getting into the commentators' philosophy.

There is a very wide range of people who have not specialised on the commentators, but to whom they are relevant. One example would be the philosophy professor who wants to see what would be interesting for his or her class. The book is intended also to help specialists in other related fields: Islamicists, Latinists, theologians, historians of science, scholars of other types of commentary or of commentary in other languages, and Medieval or Renaissance scholars, to name but a few.

Although the commentators will be treated as of interest in their own right, scholars whose interest is rather in the texts of Plato and Aristotle commented on will find that there is a very great deal to be learnt from the commentators' discussions. It will frequently be important to check what the commentators have to say. This is even more true of the more fragmentary authors preserved by the commentators, since the context of preservation can shed precious light on the meaning of the fragments.

A bibliography up to 1990 is supplied in the collection of essays, Richard Sorabji, ed., *Aristotle Transformed: The Ancient Commentators and Their Influence*, London & Ithaca, NY. That work proceeds commentator by commentator, rather than by topics, and offers historical and methodological background rather than illustrating philosophical content. It should be treated as complementary and its content will not all be repeated here. More recent bibliography is planned for 2004.[4]

The commentators

Although Aristotle's immediate pupils discussed and developed his work, it was three hundred years later in the first century BC that commentaries on Aristotle got going. Of the early commentaries we have only fragments. They focused on Aristotle's *Categories*, which was also an object of attack. Sooner or later, it was asked why Aristotle named precisely ten categories,

when Plato was content with a twofold distinction between relatives and what exists in its own right. Could not categories other than substance all be treated as relatives, e.g. quantities like large, qualities like good at boxing, acting, being acted on, posture, when, where, and having on or wearing? That might depend on whether we take Aristotle's second definition of relatives in *Cat.* 7, which is narrower than the Platonic one. It might also depend on whether Aristotle's classification is of things, words, or concepts, for grammatical distinctions are very numerous.

The earliest commentaries on Aristotle still extant are by members of the Aristotelian (or Peripatetic) school in the second century AD. Those of Aspasius and, from the end of the century, Alexander of Aphrodisias are quoted in the Sourcebook, but from Aspasius we have only a commentary, not very comprehensive, on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. Alexander, by contrast, the Aristotelian chair-holder in Athens, provides the most systematic development of Aristotelianism, written around 200 AD so as to bring the system up to date in relation to contemporary opponents. Substantial portions of the two lost commentaries by Alexander, on Aristotle's *Physics* and *On Generation and Corruption*, have recently been discovered, one in Greek and one in medieval Arabic, and translations will appear in the series *Ancient Commentators on Aristotle*. A newly found inscription by Alexander honouring his father confirms that he held the official chair as Aristotelian successor in Athens.[5]

To the Stoics, Alexander sometimes responded with outright opposition, e.g. over the right form of logical syllogism, but sometimes by implying that Aristotle already knew what the Stoics were saying. For example, the anti-Platonic distinction of mere appearance from actual belief is presented by Aristotle in terms of belief's involving conviction based on reasons. But Alexander instead borrows the Stoic account of belief based on the idea that reason *assents* to appearance.

Alexander attacks the Platonist belief in the reality of universal Forms, and his downgrading of universals, which goes well beyond Aristotle, proved surprisingly influential with Neoplatonists at one level, even while they defended the reality of Forms at another. Another opponent of Alexander, who leaned in the direction of Platonism, was the eclectic philosopher-doctor Galen with whom Alexander disagreed on dynamics and on time.

Occasionally, Alexander defends Aristotelianism by criticising Aristotle's argument as fallacious, if necessary.[6]

Alexander, and the treatise *Mantissa*, much of which may be by Alexander, had a considerable influence on the founder of Neoplatonism, Plotinus. It fitted Plotinus' views that Alexander interpreted the active intellect which Aristotle located in humans as being God resident within us. The *Mantissa* distinguishes the way in which the ordinary human intellect and the simple divine intellect are self-aware. Plotinus echoes Alexander's account of human self-intellection, but reserves total simplicity for a divinity higher than the divine Intellect, namely the One.

Plotinus discussed Alexander in his seminars in Rome in the mid-third century AD, but he also knew Aristotle's critics and made use of them. He complained that Aristotle's categories did not cover the all-important Platonic Forms, 6.1 [42]. A better classification of reality was Plato's distinction in the *Sophist* of five Great Kinds, 6.2 [43]. Even for the sensible world, only four of Aristotle's categories were useful, and that in modified form, 6.3 [44].

But in a decisive move (I follow here the standard interpretation), Plotinus' pupil, editor and biographer, Porphyry, restored Aristotle to the syllabus of Western literature once and for all. Aristotle's *Categories*, he said, was not about things, but about words insofar as they signify things, and words get applied primarily to the sensible world, not to the world of Platonic Forms.

Porphyry wrote commentaries on many of Aristotle's works and an Introduction (*Isagoge*) to Aristotle. Neoplatonist commentaries, from here on, with a few exceptions, increasingly represent the lecture courses given to students.

Porphyry also wrote probing inquiries into the religions of Christianity, of his fellow-Platonists, and of the Egyptians. I shall come to his *Against the Christians* later. In *On Abstinence from Killing Animals*, he criticised his fellow-Platonists for sacrificing and eating animals. He studies in turn the nature of animals, of the gods and of humans, to show that these practices cannot be justified on any ground. I regard this as one of the most interesting philosophical works of late antiquity, and it is translated in the series *Ancient Commentators on Aristotle*. In his *Letter to Anebo*, now fragmentary, Porphyry respectfully questions the practices of Egyptian religion.

Iamblichus was a reforming prophet. He seems to have attended Porphyry's lectures, though he proved a disrespectful pupil, and certainly not a disciple. On the harmony of Plato and Aristotle, if on little else, Porphyry and Iamblichus were allied. But they quarrelled on religion, even though Porphyry's probing of religious practice and belief was extended against the Christian religion as well as against the Egyptian religion which Iamblichus revered. Iamblichus' most important religious work, *On the Mysteries of the Egyptians*, is a defence of pagan ritual and sacrifice in reply to Porphyry's *Letter to Anebo*. It is written in a magisterial tone as coming from the Father of God, an Egyptian religious designation. Porphyry is addressed as 'you', and castigated as not even a good Platonist. Iamblichus thinks that Porphyry was looking for explanations of religious practice at too naturalistic a level beneath the divine.

Iamblichus set up his school at Apamea in modern Syria, in a beautiful site adorned later in the fourth century with mosaics by the Emperor Julian during his brief attempt to revive paganism. The mosaics, as I believe (*Aristotle Transformed*, ch. 1), represent the Rhetoric as well as the Philosophy faculty in the university where Iamblichus had earlier taught. Iamblichus died probably just before Constantine made the Empire Chris-

tian, founding Constantinople in 324, and summoning the Council of Nicaea in 325, which *inter alia* reaffirmed Christian opposition to animal sacrifice. Against this, the Emperor Julian's attempt at revival in 361-2 did not succeed.

As regards the harmonisation of Aristotle with Plato, Iamblichus went further than Porphyry, since he regarded Aristotle's categories as fitting not only the sensible world, but also the intelligible world of Platonic Forms. This required a higher interpretation, which he called 'intellective', of Aristotle's *Categories*, in parallel with the higher interpretation of religious practice. Iamblichus' pupil, Dexippus, however, reflects the Porphyrian, more than the Iamblichan, interpretation of Aristotle's categories. Iamblichus also took harmonisation further through a thoroughgoing attempt to integrate Pythagoreanism with the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle. Iamblichus further established the standard curriculum of twelve dialogues of Plato, to be read by students after the selected treatises of Aristotle, in a sequence designed for religious purposes, to lead to union with God.

In the fourth century, Themistius was a very different sort of commentator. He was an orator, politician and essayist in the capital city of Constantinople, and devoted only some of his time to Philosophy. He wrote shorter paraphrase commentaries, which, however, still offer distinctive interpretations, for example of Aristotle's definition of change, where he saw that it mattered which of several potentialities Aristotle meant to refer to. He has similarly distinctive ideas on concept formation, space, time and the continuum, and his attacks on Galen on space and time provoked replies in later commentators. His acquaintance with Neoplatonism shows through, and we sometimes see him siding with the Platonists against the Aristotelians, e.g. when he argues that Platonic Forms are needed to explain biological reproduction, *in Metaph. 12*, quoted by Averroes, translated in **Physics 1(b)** (16). Despite being different from other commentators, Themistius proved extremely important. We see him responding to Plotinus and allowing individual human intellects, *in DA* 103,32-104,6, at **Logic and Metaphysics 17(e)** (5). The importance of this is that Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth century supported himself in his controversy against followers of Averroes by citing Themistius as allowing for the immortality of individual human intellects. It is further to Themistius' credit that he was aware that pseudo-Archytas' *Categories*, much trumpeted earlier in the century by Iamblichus as Aristotle's source, was not written before Aristotle by the Pythagorean Archytas (so Boethius *in Cat.*, *PL* 64, 162 A-B).

In the early fifth century, Plutarch of Athens, who died in 432 AD (not the earlier Plutarch of Chaeroneia), provided a house in Athens for the Neoplatonist school, which archaeologists believe they have found. He and his pupil Syrianus, who was probably more critical of Aristotle than the other commentators, both taught the young Proclus. It is recorded that the works of Aristotle were known as the Lesser Mysteries, being introductory

to the Greater Mysteries of Plato. In Proclus' commentaries there is already visible the division into portions long enough for a one-hour delivery, and into separate discussions first of the doctrine and then of the wording of each Aristotelian passage. Proclus was encouraged by Plutarch to base a commentary on Plutarch's lectures on Plato's *Phaedo*, and he based his commentary on Plato's *Timaeus* on the lectures of his teacher, Syrianus. This commentary has for the Sourcebook proved the most important of the non-Aristotle commentaries.

Proclus presented himself as a holy man, capable of miracles, and purified himself with sea bathing even in winter in old age. He often opposed Plotinus. He rejected Plotinus' idea that part of our soul has never ceased from its uninterrupted contemplation of the Platonic Forms. And he rejected Plotinus' attempt to downgrade the reality of evil by equating it with an amalgam of Aristotelian matter and privation. Evil is something more active for Proclus, which parasitically feeds on the good.

In the fifth century, the future of Neoplatonist teaching began to be cemented by pupils taking over the headship in Athens or Alexandria, and even by marriage. Hermeias, who headed the school in Alexandria, married a relative of his teacher Syrianus, a relative originally intended for Proclus, while Hermeias' successor was his son Ammonius, who first studied with Proclus.

In the late fifth and early sixth centuries in Alexandria, Ammonius taught the most brilliant of the remaining Neoplatonists of both the Alexandrian and the Athenian schools, with the exception of the disaffected Damascius who started in Alexandria as a rhetorician, turned to Isidore, not to Ammonius, for philosophy, and fled with Isidore from Alexandria after the violent persecution in 488-9 of Neoplatonists by Christians. Ammonius did, however, teach Philoponus, Asclepius, Simplicius, and probably Olympiodorus. The first two wrote a number of commentaries 'from the voice of' Ammonius, in other words, based on the lectures of Ammonius, as were Proclus' in at least one case on those of Syrianus.

Although we shall see that Praechter was wrong to suggest that the Alexandrian Neoplatonists diverged from the Athenian by adopting Christianised monotheism, nonetheless Ammonius did introduce some changes of direction. I shall come later to his lack of interest in the magic of names. What is relevant here is his attitude to Aristotle. Syrianus in Athens, while expressing great esteem for Aristotle, had thought it necessary to oppose him head on concerning certain subjects (*in Metaph.* 80,4-81,14). He and his pupil Proclus saw that Aristotle disagreed with Plato both on the existence of Platonic Forms and on God's role as Creator. They both argued that Aristotle ought, on his own principles, to have agreed with Plato (Syrianus *in Metaph.* 117,25-118,11; *ap.* Asclepium *in Metaph.* 433,16; 450,22; Proclus *in Tim.* 1, 266,28-268,24).

Ammonius turns this around. He held that Aristotle actually did accept Plato's Forms, at least in the guise of principles (*logoi*) in the divine

Intellect (Asclepius *in Metaph.* 69,17-21, from the voice of Ammonius; cf. Zacharias *Ammonius*, *PG* vol. 85, col. 952 Colonna). And he wrote a whole book designed to show that Aristotle actually drew the conclusion that God was the efficient cause of the world's existence, using some of the same arguments Proclus said he should have used. Certain relevant passages are translated in **Physics 8(c)** and **(d)**.

It would be wrong to deny that the works of both Plato and Aristotle were taught in both the Athenian and Alexandrian schools. And indeed Ammonius will have used Proclus' lost commentary on Aristotle's *On Interpretation*. But the extant commentaries of Syrianus, and of his pupils Proclus and Hermeias, and those of Damascius in Athens are on Plato, while those by, or from the voice of, Ammonius in Alexandria are on Aristotle.

Philoponus was a Christian and philosophically the most brilliant of all the commentators. He increasingly used Neoplatonist doctrine, in which he was steeped, to make the case for Christianity against the pagan Neoplatonists. In 529 AD he published what I would regard as another of the most interesting philosophical works of Late Antiquity. His *Against Proclus On the Eternity of the World* proves that pagan principles support the Christian belief in the beginning of the universe. This text is also being included in the series *Ancient Commentators on Aristotle*. Philoponus introduces the argument, sometimes wrongly credited to St Bonaventure in the thirteenth century, that even the pagans must admit that Christianity is right that the universe had a beginning, because they cannot afford to allow that past years, and a fortiori past days, reach and will exceed infinity. His Christian ideas are reflected also in his commentaries on Aristotle, and the writings add up to a Christian alternative to Aristotelian science (Richard Sorabji, ed., *Philoponus and the Rejection of Aristotelian Science*). As regards the Aristotelian idea of prime matter as the ultimate subject of qualities, Philoponus substitutes the idea of featureless extension which serves as a field for the qualities. This three-dimensional extension acts not only as the basic matter of bodies, but also as the form by which body is defined.

Philoponus also made major contributions to dynamics. He can be regarded as the inventor of the force called impetus, which Thomas Kuhn treated as a scientific revolution of the fourteenth century. He is praised by Galileo for his very effective arguments for the possibility of motion in a vacuum, which would not, as Aristotle alleged, call for infinite speed. And he reports experiments with the speed of fall of bodies of different weights.

AD 529 was a fateful year. St Benedict founded the monastery at Monte Cassino and the Christian Emperor Justinian closed the Athenian Neoplatonist school. Damascius, its then head, displayed an originality concerning time as discontinuous, prime matter, the causal mechanism of procession (**Physics** volume), pleasures of the mind as activities and thinking as distinct from its objects (**Psychology** volume), often by way of correcting Proclus. His escape from Christian persecution in Alexandria

and subsequent career has been vividly described by Polymnia Athanassiadi, who thinks the house used by Damascius for the school, distinct from Plutarch's, can be identified among the excavations.[7]

The fate of the seven Athenian philosophers, including Simplicius and Priscian, after their brief removal to the court of Chosroes at Ctesiphon in modern Iraq, is a subject of much discussion. The attractive idea that the Athenian School did not disappear from the map of history depends, unfortunately, on circumstantial evidence none of which is conclusive. According to this view,[8] Simplicius at least (some say the others too) went to Harran, a site in modern Turkey, from where in the ninth century a mathematician-philosopher came to Baghdad and was appointed (on this view because of his Harranian learning) to facilitate the Arabic revival of the Neoplatonist commentary tradition. Be that as it may, Simplicius wrote the most informative commentaries of all, after 529 AD, commentaries which have the leisure to give the most comprehensive survey available of the course of Greek philosophy, and which include bitter comments on the irreligion of the faithless Christian renegade, Philoponus. Simplicius' commentary on Aristotle's *Categories* incorporates the most thorough critique known to me of the basic metaphysics that Aristotle propounds in that work. His commentary on Aristotle's *Physics* contains two excursuses on place and time, whose interest matches that of the excursuses on place and vacuum in the *Physics* commentary of Philoponus.

Thanks to Ammonius, the Alexandrian school continued, but Olympiodorus, in the mid-sixth century, was the last pagan head. Elias and David were Christians, whose extant commentaries are shrunk down to the logic part of the syllabus, which is perhaps all the Christian students were expected to learn. If Stephanus, who probably continued into the seventh century, is the author of the Greek commentary on Book 3 of Aristotle's *On the Soul* attributed to Philoponus (and the recent translation of this work may help to support this conjecture), then there will have been a modest, but temporary, re-expansion of interest.

The revival of the commentary tradition was due above all to the Arabic world of ninth-century Baghdad, where al-Kindi master-minded translations of Greek texts, often via Syriac. A further revival came in the twelfth century, when Arabic texts from Spain as well as Greek texts from the Byzantine world were translated into Latin. The continuing translations were to be used, among others, by Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth century, with important results for the tradition. The extent to which the commentary tradition was advanced before that in the Byzantine world between the seventh and the twelfth centuries is only now beginning seriously to be explored. The only two late Byzantine commentators quoted in the Sourcebook are Eustratius in 1050/1060 – *c.* 1120 AD and Michael of Ephesus, who in 1138 AD or later, was made by the Princess Anna Comnena to assemble and supplement the commentaries on Aristotle preserved from a much earlier date. Michael's collections of pseudo-Alexander commentary have been most fully studied by Sten Ebbesen. Michael's own

commentaries on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* and on the biological works, which had been omitted from the earlier curriculum, tend to be in the style of Alexander rather than of the Neoplatonists.

Obviously, translation played a major role in this transmission, but as Carlos Steel has made clear, the environment has to be receptive as well, if translation is to have this kind of influence.[9]

Neoplatonism

I have already said that the Sourcebook focuses on the Commentators, not on Neoplatonism. But most of the commentators are Neoplatonists, and Neoplatonism is much less widely studied nowadays than Aristotelianism. So to many the commentators' Neoplatonism will seem unfamiliar. Can it be made more familiar?

Charles Taylor in *Sources of the Self*, Cambridge 1989, ch. 7, has described a radically reflexive stance which is very familiar to modern philosophers because it is the stance of Descartes. It attends to our own experience and sees this as the source of truth. The only thing is that Taylor, followed by others (e.g. Phillip Cary, *Augustine's Invention of the Inner Self*, Oxford 2000), ascribes to Augustine the shift to this radically reflexive stance, whereas, with one exception, everything that Taylor uncovers in Augustine was already in Plotinus, who in turn draws at least his *terminology* for self-awareness from the Stoics, and in fact more than terminology, since Epictetus *Discourses* 3.22.38-9 says that we find preconceptions about the good within ourselves, and Cicero borrows from the Stoics when he says in connexion with natural law and justice, *On Laws* 1.22.58, that one finds them within (*in se*), cf. also *Republic* 3.22.33.

Augustine tells us that he learnt his methodology of looking inwards from 'the books of the Platonists', *Confessions* 7.10.16. Plotinus and Porphyry were his main sources for this. Augustine may in addition be influenced by Cicero, when he offers a view of natural law as written in our hearts and impressed on us, though for this he draws also on Romans 2.14-15, at *Confessions* 2.4, and *On Free Choice of the Will* 1.6.15.

The exception is that Augustine is the first person we know to have produced the *cogito* arguments, later made famous by Descartes, although even here Augustine may have been partly inspired by Porphyry when he *applies* the *cogito* to arguing that we can know that our soul is incorporeal. One example, from almost a dozen, of Augustine's use of the *cogito* is given under **Psychology 4(f)** and **6(b)**.

Augustine's use of Plotinus in no way impugns his originality. Putting old material to new use is a form of originality, which Augustine also displays elsewhere. But what it does mean is that it is Plotinus and the Neoplatonists, and in a preliminary way the Stoics before them, who really introduce into Western Philosophy Taylor's radically reflexive view so familiar from Descartes. We see how important Plotinus thought it that the objects of Intellect should be *within* the Intellect from the debate that

Porphyry reports in his *Life of Plotinus*, chs 18, 20 (**Psychology 3(k)**). In Plotinus' seminar, Porphyry was made to debate the question and only converted to Plotinus' view after two replies by his fellow student Amelius.

Admittedly, Proclus later disagreed with Plotinus' view (*in Parm.* 948,14-20) because he took it to be allied with Plotinus' belief that part of our soul never ceases its unconscious contemplation of the intelligible Forms. But Proclus *in Alc. 1* 5,13-14, following Iamblichus *ap.* Proclum *in Alc. 1* 11,11-17, and like the *Anonymous Prolegomena to Platonic Philosophy* ch. 26, holds that the starting point for Plato and the whole of Philosophy must be the Delphic saying 'know thyself', studied in Plato's *First Alcibiades* (translations in **Psychology 15(a)**). This fits with Plotinus' insistence, which influenced Augustine, that we must look for the chief levels of reality, the Intellect and the One, *within* ourselves, 1.6 [1] 9 (8); 5.8 [31] 10 (31-43); 6.9 [9] 7 (16-23), translated in **Psychology 15(b)**. Plotinus' most famous autobiographical account of his experience of union with the Intellect in 4.8 [6] 1 (1-11) starts by saying that he has often withdrawn from everything else into himself. Even the phenomenological character of the experience is taken to indicate how things really are. There is not merely a sense of timelessness; the Intellect, and one's self as united with it, are really timeless, 3.7 [45] 11. There is not merely a loss of sense of where one's own boundary stops and that of Intellect or the One begins, 6.5 [23] 7 (14-17); there is genuine union. Plotinus holds more generally that the source from which something stems is within it, and he applies this to the hypostasis Intellect: 'For in turning back (*epistrephein*) on itself, [Intellect] turns back on its source' (Plotinus 6.9 [9] 2 (35-6); tr. BF).

Cary (op. cit., ch. 3) has argued for Augustine's invention of the Inner Self, and has distinguished Augustine from Plotinus as inviting us to look not only in ourselves for God, but first in and then up. But not only does Plotinus also recognise more than one level. (The characteristic ratiocinative self is below the intellect of soul, which is a higher self; there are many levels of self; the human Intellect is in turn derived from the divine hypostasis Intellect; the One is beyond Intellect again; see **Logic and Metaphysics 18(a)**). But more importantly, Plotinus puts more into the inner world than Augustine, since he locates everything divine within. Only the sensible world, as described in the **Physics** volume, and in the earlier part of **Logic and Metaphysics**, remains outside.

There is another contribution of Neoplatonism, which is a contribution of the whole period 200-600 AD. It addresses some questions which we ought to address, but do not, or not sufficiently. For example, the Christian world traditionally believes in life after death, and accordingly some aspects of this question are much discussed by modern philosophers: would disembodied consciousness be possible? What would make the supposedly revived future person to be me, rather than someone else? But other relevant questions have been relatively neglected, and at these points, where late antiquity may seem to us to be at its most outlandish, we should instead see the need to address the questions. If, as the Christian tradition

holds, we shall have new bodies in the next life, what kind of bodies would be appropriate to such different conditions? Here the easily ridiculed discussion of Platonic physical vehicles is relevant. Would such a life be even tolerable for humans, let alone superior? Here the ascetic practices of late antiquity, pushing human possibilities to their limits, which may seem so alien, are highly relevant. If the life in question is instead disembodied, might it be a life outside of time altogether? The idea that space and time might in any case be the less real products of a more profound reality has indeed been endorsed by the modern physicist David Bohm (*Wholeness and the Implicate Order*, London 1980), and in a joint seminar with myself and Clive Kilmister at King's College London, he considered the Neoplatonists to be expressing exactly his own view.

The transformation of Plato and Aristotle

In Neoplatonism, though not in Aristotelianism, Plato and Aristotle are transformed in a variety of different ways. The transformation is partly driven by a wish to harmonise Plato and Aristotle, but only partly. There is less effort to harmonise the two in some commentators than in others, and on some issues, we shall see, there is less harmonisation among our commentators than there was in the Middle Platonism of an earlier period. Further, the transformation of views is driven by other factors too besides harmonisation.

Harmonisation is most marked in Porphyry and Ammonius. It seems to be least favoured by Syrianus and Proclus. Simplicius says that the good commentator should find Plato and Aristotle in harmony on most points, *in Cat.* 7,23-32. The presumption for a Neoplatonist is that, in case of disharmony, it is Plato who will be right. But even this is reversed by a late commentator, Olympiodorus, who backs Aristotle against Plato on the definition of relatives, *in Cat.* 112,19ff.

As an example of harmonisation, we have seen that Porphyry, on the standard interpretation, harmonised Aristotle's categories with Platonism. Hereafter, it became increasingly useful to reinforce the myth of harmony in the face of Christian charges that pagan philosophers contradicted each other. As already mentioned, there was an irony in this, because the harmonisation, whose motive was thus partly anti-Christian, finished in the thirteenth century by helping Thomas Aquinas to present Aristotle as safe for Christianity, since the assimilation to Plato had turned Aristotle's God from a thinker into a Creator, and Aristotle's human soul into an immortal one.

One might have thought that the pressure towards harmonisation would be bad for Philosophy. Having to convince the Christians that Plato and Aristotle agreed with each other on almost everything would surely lead to loss of their wonderful insights. But in fact it gave a distinctive character, interesting in its own right, to Neoplatonism. And, curiously, it led to an even closer reading of the texts of Plato and Aristotle, because

their texts had to be read very closely indeed, if one was going to argue that what they really meant was something different from what at first sight might appear. It also constituted a fruitful challenge to the imagination of the Greek Neoplatonist commentators. They took Plato to postulate a changeless and timeless world of divine Platonic Forms and they had to think out how such a world would relate to the temporal, changing world described by Aristotle.

I should like now to look at some examples of what happened to the views of Plato and Aristotle in Neoplatonism, to see what factors besides harmonisation are at work, whether Plato is transformed in the process as much as Aristotle, and where the transformations were important for subsequent Philosophy.

It is difficult to harmonise Plato with Aristotle on certain issues concerning rationalism versus empiricism. In the *Theaetetus* 186A-187A, Plato maintains that perception can do practically nothing at all without the aid of reason, and the Middle Platonist, Alcinous, elaborates this view in his *Didaskalikos* ch. 4, to maintain that there would be no perceptual recognition without reason. So far this rejects Aristotle's view that perception is entirely separate from reason and that animals can get along very well by using perception on its own, while completely bereft of reason. But a qualification is that the relevant kind of reason, for Alcinous, is empirically based and manifested in opinions (*doxastikos logos*).

To take another example, Plato holds in the *Phaedo* that our concepts are recollected from a life before our birth and stored in our rational souls. Aristotle, by contrast, argues in the last chapter of his *Posterior Analytics* that the most rudimentary universal concept of (say) an ox is based on nothing more than many memories of perceived oxen and that perception already grasps universal concepts, although intellect plays a role at some stage. How can these very different views of the competence of perception as opposed to reason be harmonised?

The Platonists go several different ways on this issue. Some, starting with the Middle Platonist, Alcinous (*Didaskalikos*, ch. 4), accept both Aristotle's concepts and Plato's, while often regarding the latter as more accurate. Others, starting with Syrianus and Proclus and continuing with Simplicius and Olympiodorus, though listing Aristotle's concepts, attack them, especially in geometry, as unable to do the necessary work. A third manoeuvre is the claim of Iamblichus, Philoponus and perhaps Plutarch of Athens, that Aristotle himself accepted Plato's pre-nate concepts alongside his own empirically gained ones. This is explained in **Psychology 5(b)**, **(c)** and **(d)** and **Logic and Metaphysics 5(c)** and **12(b).**

As for perception, Priscian repeats that empirically based reason, *doxastikos logos*, is required for perceptual recognition. But the late Neoplatonists give a further role to *logos*, now in the sense of a concept. Perceptual recognition cannot occur unless the recollected Platonic concepts are projected from the mind, to make the recognition possible. So far, the harmonisation concerning the first issue, concepts, has been mixed.

Despite some harmonisation, and positive support, a tendency among some Neoplatonists has been rejection of Aristotle's account of concepts. On the second issue, perception's independence from reason, rejection of Aristotle has been complete – perceptual recognition cannot occur without reason. But the concept of reason has been modified. In some cases, an empiricist concept of reason has been substituted. In other cases, Plato's insistence on the need for reason has been defended by means of a theory of projecting concepts which goes far beyond Plato.

There is a third issue, also connected with the dependence of perception on reason. How are we aware of our own mental activities? Discussing awareness of our own perceptions, Aristotle says that this is effected by a perceptual faculty, the so-called 'common sense'. But Proclus objects that, besides perception, we also have, and are aware of, reason and different kinds of desire. Surely awareness of all these diverse activities must be assigned to something higher than the common sense. 'Simplicius' *in DA* comes to Aristotle's aid. The common sense can indeed be aware of this great diversity of activities, he says, if we once recognise that human common sense is permeated by reason. This answer is perfectly congenial to the Platonist tradition, which, starting from Plato's *Theaetetus*, regards perception as dependent on reason. But to Aristotle this defence of his reference to the common sense would be anathema. As the great biological taxonomist, he wanted to show that perception was independent of reason and could be used to mark off the animal kingdom. Aristotle loses again in this harmonisation.

But Aristotle does not always lose. Something very unexpected happened in the commentators' discussion of universals. Plato introduced the idea of Forms or Ideas, and these were understood by Aristotle and by other schools in the following centuries to be universals which somehow transcended the physical world and yet explained the acquisition of properties by things in the physical world. This Platonic account of universals was condemned in turn by Aristotle, by the Stoics and by Aristotle's great protagonist, Alexander. Aristotle complained that the changeless Platonic Forms could not act as causes of anything, and he along with Alexander substituted deflationary accounts of universals, Alexander in some texts reducing them to mental constructs with a role of practically no significance at all. Would we not expect the Neoplatonist commentators to turn against Alexander's deflationary account? It is very surprising, then, to find that the Neoplatonist Porphyry, and Boethius expounding Porphyry, seem content with a deflationary account of universals close to the one proposed by Alexander. What has happened to universals as Platonic Forms? The answer, I believe, is that the Neoplatonists have so emphasised the role of Forms as causes, a role which Aristotle said they could not play, that they are willing to backtrack on the other role of Forms as universals, Simplicius *in Cat.* 82,35-83,20, Proclus *in Parm.* 880,3-11. A Form is not after all something universal and common to all instances, for it is too far superior to them. If it is something common at all, it is common as a cause

to all its effects, but not as a common feature. Thus Aristotle loses on the issue of whether Forms can be causes, but he wins on the issue of whether universals are Forms.

The Aristotelians suffer from a curious distortion of their account of individuals. When Porphyry writes his introduction to Aristotle, the *Isagoge,* he describes individuals as being unique bundles (*athroismata*) of distinctive qualities (*idiotêtes*). Why? – for Aristotle believes that the individual consists of matter and form. I conjecture that once again Plato's *Theaetetus* is the ultimate source, although the *athroisma* idea is in the same chapter of Alcinous, *Didaskalikos*, ch. 4. In the *Theaetetus*, the individual Theaetetus is described as consisting of qualities such as a distinctive snubness of nose. The terms 'bundle' (*athroisma*) and 'distinctive' (*idios*) occur earlier in the *Theaetetus* respectively at 157B-C and 154A, 166C. I think Porphyry offers this Platonic view of the individual, because his introduction is for beginners in Philosophy, and he does not yet want to broach the more complex concepts of matter and form, which enter into Aristotle's account of the individual. But because Porphyry wrote this in an introduction to Aristotle, later Neoplatonists, Proclus, Simplicius, and possibly 'Philoponus', though they are well aware of Aristotle's belief in matter and form, take it to be a view, if not of Aristotle, at any rate of the Aristotelian school. If so, the Aristotelians' account of individuals has been harmonised with Plato's, this time by a sort of accident of interpretation.

My first three examples have come from the field of psychology: concepts, perception and self-awareness, my next two from logic and metaphysics: universals and individuals. The next two examples will come from physics. Aristotle disagreed with Plato in postulating a fifth element as constituting the heavens, whereas Plato had been satisfied with one of the standard four elements, namely fire. The commentators offer almost opposite harmonisations, according to whether they are friendly or hostile to Aristotle. Proclus, the hostile one, tries to show, in the preface to his commentary on Plato's *Timaeus*, that Plato had already anticipated virtually everything that Aristotle had to say. So when Plato associated the shape of the heavens with the fifth of the five figures that had been shown to be the only possible regular convex solids in geometry, he was anticipating Aristotle's fifth element, *in Tim.* 1.6,29-7,2; 2.49,29-50,2. The explanation is repeated by Simplicius, *in Cael.* 12,16-27. But Simplicius knows a more friendly method of harmonisation, *in Cael.* 85,31-86,7. Aristotle recognised that the heavens were a particularly pure mixture of the four elements with fire predominating. He spoke as if the result were a fifth element, only to emphasise its divinity in praiseworthy opposition to the sort of view more recently taken by the Christians. On both interpretations Aristotle's view is accommodated, but on the first he comes out an imitator, on the second a hero. Harmonisation is not a unitary procedure.

The same hostility is exhibited by Proclus, this time on better grounds,

in connexion with God's responsibility for the world's existence. Aristotle's God is a thinker, not a creator, and he inspires motion in the universe, but does not provide existence, since the five elements exist independently of him. At best, as pointed out by Iamblichus' pupil Dexippus, the motion (by producing seasonal rainfall, etc.) gives form and life to some things. But Proclus complains that, on his own principles, Aristotle should have made God responsible for the existence of the universe. Proclus' pupil, Ammonius, effects the harmonisation, arguing at book length that this is what Aristotle intended his principles to show,[10] and Simplicius follows Ammonius. This is the tradition that enabled Thomas Aquinas to harmonise Aristotle's God with Christianity.

I should finish with the other harmonisation that was crucial for Christian acceptance of Aristotle – the issue of individual immortality. This time, even Plato's views caused some problem. Although he makes Socrates assure his friends in the *Phaedo* on the day of his execution that he personally will survive, there is room for worry that the rational soul, which is what Plato regards as the true self, is rather impersonal. On one interpretation, Plato's *First Alcibiades* even recognises this at 130D. The worry comes to a head when Plotinus discusses those disembodied human souls which have attained the ideal state of identifying themselves with Intellect, and whose thoughts have the same content – the Platonic Forms. What is there left to distinguish these souls from each other? Plotinus' analogy is with a theorem in a mathematical system. Each theorem is distinct, but cannot be understood as a theorem, except in terms of the whole system.

But if this preserves some individuality, why should Aristotle agree? He insists from the opening chapter of *On the Soul* that no mental activities, with the possible exception of thinking, can occur apart from a body The soul turns out to exist only as enforming a living body, so that, presumably, we perish when we die. The special case of thinking is discussed in Book 3, ch. 5. Here room is made for a productive intellect to be resident in us. But is this intellect part of us, or, as Alexander was to say, is it rather God resident in us, which offers no immortality to us? Themistius disagreed with Alexander, and made it part of the human soul. But even that leaves a question: is it a soul shared by the human race, as the followers of Averroes were later to say, or is it individual? In his controversy with the Averroists, Thomas Aquinas claimed support from Themistius, who allowed for individual intellects. What Averroes did was to apply to all of our intellect what Philoponus and 'Philoponus' conceded about part of our intellect, that its immortality is merely an unending succession of mortal intellects (**Psychology 3(g)** and **Logic and Metaphysics 17(e)**). In this example, Plato as well as Aristotle have to be subjected to careful reinterpretation, to get the desired result.

Let us draw some conclusions. Plato has been reinterpreted as well as Aristotle on perception, on concepts, on the fifth element, on individuals and, most radically, on universals. Only some attempted to harmonise

Plato and Aristotle on concepts, and any harmonisation on individuals was an unrecognised accident. The forces in play have not only been harmonisation. There was also a misinterpretation arising from the reinterpretation of Porphyry's *Isagoge* as an authoritative source for Aristotelian views. And there was a response within Platonism to internal pressures concerning the role of Forms. The more important the causal role, the less defended was the role of Forms as universals. The effect of these changes on Medieval Philosophy was almost as important in the case of universals as in the case of the Creator God and the immortal human soul.

The commentators and Christianity

The Neoplatonists lived in a love-hate relationship with Christianity. Often they influenced it, for example, on the natures of Christ and the person of the Trinity. They shared many concerns: life and punishment after death, containers for the departed soul, continuity and individuality of the person, body-soul relations, prayer, prophecy, providence, evil, fate, chance, temptation, sin, pride and the Fall, forgiveness, freedom from emotion, demons and angels, sacrifice, suicide and martyrdom, nature and the supernatural, mystical experience of God, his ineffability, the creation of the universe, its beginning and end, the stars, time and eternity, timeless knowledge and causation, omniscience and omnipotence. They moved in the same world of ideas and the Sourcebook will make cross-references.

In his *Confessions* 7.9.14; 7.20.26, Augustine describes being converted to Christianity in 386 AD by 'books of the Platonists', which clearly include some works of Plotinus. Courcelle has claimed to trace to the day the Platonist ideas Augustine would have heard from the sermons of St Ambrose in Milan. Even later, in *City of God* Book 10, Augustine concedes that Porphyry has a dim awareness of the Christian Trinity, when he speaks of three gods, describing One and Intellect as God the Father and God the Son, and further recognising not merely Plotinus' third hypostasis, the Soul, but a triad of Being, Life and Intellect (*City of God* 10.23; 29, translated in **Logic and Metaphysics 14(c)**). Porphyry, Augustine says, also recognises the limitations of pagan theurgic ritual, regarding it as unnecessary and unhelpful to intellectuals like himself and even recognising the importance of God's grace, though Augustine complains that Porphyry exploits the utility of theurgy in recruiting the masses to pagan religion, *City of God* 10.9; 27; 29, translated in **Psychology 18(b)**. Grace, we shall find there, had also been recognised earlier by Plotinus, and was even more recognised in theurgy itself by Iamblichus and Proclus.

Porphyry is a striking case. His serious probing of Christianity in *Against the Christians*, parallel to his probing of Egyptian religion in his *Letter to Anebo*, was viewed as the most serious intellectual threat to Christianity and was twice subjected to burning. Yet his advocacy of the

Chaldaean ideals of faith, truth, love and hope (*Letter to Marcella* 24, translated below), and his insistence that the true sacrifice is that of a pure mind (*Abstinence* 2.61, translated in **Psychology 18(a)**) fit very well with Christianity, even if not for the Christian reason that animal sacrifice is superseded by Christ's having made the final sacrifice. Moreover, Porphyry's non-spatial account of the relation between soul and body seems to have been applied by Augustine and other Christians not only to soul and body, but also to the natures of Christ and the persons of the Trinity.

We have seen that Porphyry's probable pupil, Iamblichus, made a powerful defence of pagan religious practice in the early fourth century. He replied with some contempt in *On the Mysteries of the Egyptians* to Porphyry's doubts, and provided a model to the later Emperor Julian for the revival of pagan religion.

In the fifth century, pagan Neoplatonists were severely persecuted by Christians in Alexandria, while in Athens Proclus stopped teaching for a year, to avoid persecution for impiety. We have seen that Damascius escaped from Alexandria, eventually to become head of the Neoplatonist school in Athens. Proclus and Damascius both complain, sometimes in coded terms, of the hegemony of Christianity, which they regard as deeply irreligious, and which they still hope is temporary. The complaints made against the Christian Philoponus by Simplicius after the Athenian closure of 529 have already been mentioned. He calls Philoponus 'the Grammarian' perhaps in allusion to his having a post other than the Philosophy Chair, but he also thinks of a grammarian as one who knows a text without putting it into practice (*Commentary on Epictetus*, ch. 62, lines 22-7 Hadot (with her comment p. 55) = Dübner 134,17-24). Philoponus, however, was attacked from both sides. He eventually became the intellectual leader of those Christians who believed that Christ had only one nature, not two natures, one human, one divine. But this doctrine was declared heretical, and Philoponus was also posthumously condemned for applying to the Christian Trinity Porphyry's conception of three gods, instead of three persons.

Other Christians at the end of the fifth and beginning of the sixth centuries also harnessed Neoplatonist views. Boethius' classic *Consolation of Philosophy* is so congenial to Platonist belief that Boethius has wrongly been thought not to be Christian. Pseudo-Dionysius, as much as Augustine before him, drew on Neoplatonism in ways that profoundly influenced Christian mystical thought. But his method was the very different one of plagiarising the theological ideas of Proclus to produce Christian documents purporting to come from St Paul's disciple Dionysius in the first century. The plagiarism worked, and there is a note, possibly written by Philoponus, claiming that it was Proclus who plagiarised Dionysius.

In Alexandria, by the time of Olympiodorus, pupils were predominantly Christian, and we see him telling them that they can think of Neoplatonist daemons as angels (*in Alc. 1* 21,15-18), and that he is as much a monotheist as they are (*in Gorg.* 32-3; 243-4, the latter passage translated in **Logic**

and Metaphysics 14(c)). In fact, five *in Cat.* commentaries say that the purpose of reading Aristotle's philosophy is to know that there is only one supreme source, Ammonius 6,9-16; Philoponus 5,34-6,2; Olympiodorus 9,14-30; Simplicius 6,6-18; Elias 119,26-121,4. Elias, the Christian professor, argues against objections that this was Aristotle's view.

The pagan Neoplatonists, though postulating many gods, were not thereby violating the views of such Christians as Origen *Against Celsus* 5.4 and Augustine, who allowed the term 'god' to be applied to both angels and, in Augustine's case, humans. He explicitly agrees with Porphyry, in *City of God* 9.23, that this is only a verbal issue, provided, he adds, that the other gods owe their divine characteristics to the one God, as the Neoplatonists would agree. Olympiodorus issues an analogous *caveat*, that the other gods are used by the One Cause as intermediaries. Some Christians, Origen and Eusebius, were even ready to apply the term 'god' to persons of the Christian Trinity, and the Christian commentator Philoponus was to endorse that, even though his endorsement was condemned. Texts are translated in **Logic and Metaphysics 14(c)**.

I think it will throw light on the religious situation to consider what concession Ammonius had to make to the Christian authorities in order to keep the Alexandrian School of Neoplatonism open, and how much this concession affected the teaching.

There has been a mystery what agreement Ammonius struck with the Christian patriarch. Damascius in Athens expresses his disgust in his so-called *Life of Isidore* 250,2; 251,12-14, now put in its wider context as fr. 118B in Damascius' *Philosophical History* by Polymnia Athanassiadi:

> Ammonius, who was disgustingly mercenary and saw everything in terms of profit of any kind, made an agreement with the then bishop of the prevailing doctrine, Damascius *Philosophical History* 118B Athanassiadi (= *Life of Isidore* 251,12-14; tr. RRKS).

Three suggestions have run into counter-examples,[11] Praechter's of 1910 and 1912, that Ammonius agreed to continue a policy, alleged to be Alexandrian, of reducing the number of Neoplatonist gods to one by collapsing the One into the Intellect, Saffrey's of 1954 that he agreed to teach only Aristotle, not Plato and Westerink's of 1962 that he kept quiet about the pagan belief in the eternity and divinity of the world (references in Sorabji, ed. *Aristotle Transformed*, 12). I therefore suggested (loc. cit.) that the agreement was more likely to concern not theological doctrine directly, but refraining from the open promotion of pagan practice, which (as Athanassiadi has now shown, though her sympathies lie with Damascius and against Ammonius, 30-2 of her *Damascius. The Philosophical History*) Damascius carried out in Athens, bravely, but incautiously.

Athanassiadi has added yet a further hypothesis, with which I have explained my disagreement elsewhere, that Ammonius' concession was to betray the hiding places of his fellow Neoplatonists in Alexandria during

the persecution of the 480s, and that his reward was not literally financial.[12]

My own conjecture, that Ammonius' concession concerned first and foremost pagan religious practice, fits well with new evidence that Ammonius expresses a very different view of religion from that of his Athenian predecessors. What strikes me most is Ammonius' treatment of the efficacy in ritual of divine names properly chosen by a theurgist, and the evidence that this provides for the naturalness of certain names. Ammonius claims at the beginning of his commentary on Aristotle's *de Interpretatione* 1,6-11, that he is recording the interpretations of his teacher Proclus, although he hopes to add further clarification himself. It has been shown by Anne Sheppard how closely Ammonius' commentary follows Proclus' commentary on a different work, Plato' s *Cratylus*.[13] Yet when Ammonius comes to the present subject, he is silent about the argument from the efficacy of divine names in ritual, to which Proclus had devoted pages. This efficacy is not only endorsed by the *Chaldaean Oracles*, but used as a proof of the naturalness of divine names by Iamblichus *Myst.* 7.4, 255,5-256,3 Des Places, and by Proclus *in Crat.* 51-2; 57; 71 Pasquali, whose view is mentioned as one among others by Damascius *in Phileb.* 24 Westerink. According to Proclus, Iamblichus held that Theurgy imitates secret marks implanted in us by the gods, when it frames divine names, *in Crat.* 71, 31,24-32,5 Pasquali. Yet Ammonius is silent about all this. Instead he refers to the efficacy of *human* names in certain prayers and curses. And even to this he devotes only three lines, *in Int.* 38,23-6. Moreover, because the efficacy of human names was not the argument that appealed to the Neoplatonists, he is able to dissociate Neoplatonism entirely from the whole line of thought, and credit it instead to a philosophically irrelevant Egyptian priest, Dousareios of Petra. The Christian Origen, borrowing presumably from a Platonist source, had argued that the natural efficacy of *divine* names in ritual is even clearer evidence of their naturalness than the natural efficacy of *human* names, *Against Celsus* 5.45.[14] Iamblichus discounted the use of human names, at least in the case of love-spells, as depending merely on *human* artifice exploiting natural sympathy in the universe.

Why was Ammonius silent at this point on his predecessors' major argument for the naturalness of certain names? Robbert van den Berg has pointed out[15] that while Proclus offers a role in the giving of names (and not only of divine names) to the divine Craftsman (*in Crat.* 51, pp.19,22-20,21 Pasquali; *Plat. Theol.* 1.29, p. 124,12-20 Saffrey-Westerink), Ammonius denies (*in Int.* 38,26-8; *in Cat.* 11,8-17) any role to the gods in the giving of names. Names are, as Aristotle says, the result of human agreements. In this, Ammonius follows Porphyry's view that names are 'imposed' by humans. But Aristotle is said still to agree with the Socrates of Plato's *Cratylus* that names are natural in one of the senses mentioned by Proclus *in Crat.* 7,18-8,14, for they are like artistic images which fit the natures of things, *in Int.* 34,17-37,18. Ammonius, unlike Proclus, supports

Aristotle and harmonises him with Plato partly through taking a different view of the gods, a view in this case based on Porphyry. This different account of the gods need not be, as I once thought, the result of his agreement with the Christian authorities, but rather something which helped to facilitate that agreement.

There is another piece of evidence about Ammonius' treatment of religion. At the beginning of his commentary on Aristotle's *de Interpretatione*, 1,6-11, he has a punning one-line invocation of Hermes, god of eloquence and hermeneutics. Iamblichus had also invoked Hermes as god of eloquence at the beginning of his *On the Mysteries of the Egyptians*, but he does so in a religious spirit, to open a religious treatise, calling Hermes protector of the true science of the gods, accepted by all priests (1.4-2.3 Des Places). Even more devout are the prayers which the Athenian Simplicius includes in his commentaries. The prayer at the end of his *de Caelo* commentary, 731,25-9, has been studied for its fervour by Philippe Hoffmann,[16] who translates it as follows.

> These reflections O Lord, Creator of the whole universe and of the simple bodies within it, I offer to you as a hymn, to you and to the beings you have produced, I who have ardently desired to contemplate the greatness of your works and to reveal it to those who are worthy of it, so that, conceiving nothing mean or human about you, we may adore you in accordance with your transcendency in relation to all the things you have created.

By contrast Ammonius merely says that if he is able to add further clarification after recording the interpretations of Proclus, he will owe thanks to the god of eloquence. David Blank has pointed out, in his translation in the *Ancient Commentators* series, that there is probably a pun in acknowledging the god of hermeneutics in a commentary on Aristotle's treatise, whose Greek title, *Peri hermêneias,* also invokes hermeneutics.

If I am right that Ammonius' concession concerned religious practice, what did he gain in return? I conjecture that it was a salary to keep his prodigious teaching going. We know that his philosopher-father, Hermeias, had received maintenance from the state (*dêmosia sitêsis*), and that through the influence of his mother, this had exceptionally been extended to the young Ammonius and to his short-lived brother, until such time as they should become philosophers (Damascius *The Philosophical History* fr. 56 Athanassiadi). In other words, the Christian authorities, at least in an earlier generation in Alexandria, had actually invested in his becoming a philosopher. Whether or not he was a member of the disliked School of Horapollo, they may well have thought that Ammonius was not, like Horapollo, going to start converting Christians. At least by the time of the disbandment of Horapollo's school, if not sooner, Ammonius will have needed money to continue teaching, and given the city's acceptance of his

mother and investment in his playing that role, it may have seemed only natural to provide a teaching salary, on condition that the teaching did not emphasise pagan religious practice, as in Ammonius' case they might have been confident it would not.

Even if I am right that Ammonius' concession was, contrary to Praechter's view, primarily about religious practice, Praechter will still have been right to the extent that there were bound to be some implications for doctrinal content, but these implications will have been derivative. One implication would have been the need to avoid the argument from the efficacy of theurgically chosen divine names. But in addition, Ammonius' Alexandrians did not write theological treatises as Iamblichus and the Athenians did, such as the commentaries on the *Chaldaean Oracles*, Iamblichus' *On the Mysteries of the Egyptians*, Proclus' *Platonic Theology*, or Damascius' *On First Principles*. Praechter was wrong that they suppressed the One. Nor did they deliberately simplify Proclus' system of multiple gods and henads. But it is just as significant that they did not write the sort of treatises which would have told us what they thought about these gods and henads. Praechter was moreover right that they focused more on Aristotle and gave Aristotle more credit than Proclus had. Praechter pointed out that the Alexandrian, Olympiodorus, backs Aristotle against Plato on the definition of the category of relatives, *in Cat.* 112,19ff. I would also recall that whereas Proclus complains that Aristotle wrongly failed to make God responsible for the existence of the universe (*in Tim.* 1.266,28-268,24 Diehl), Ammonius wrote a whole book to show that this was precisely what Aristotle did do (so Simplicius *in Phys.* 1361,11-1363,12).

Although I do not believe that Ammonius was involved in betraying the hiding places of his fellow Neoplatonists in the 480s, was his concession a betrayal of the spirit of Neoplatonism? No: only of that spirit, *as it was construed* by the Athenians and other followers of Iamblichus. But Neoplatonism accommodated more than one strand. First, Ammonius did not, as Praechter supposed, suppress recognition of the supreme divinity, the One, above the Intellect. Secondly, Ammonius' next successor but one, Olympiodorus, feels absolutely free to say that Theurgy gives us union with the intelligibles. The context of his statement is very interesting. After discussing five levels of virtue, he gives a role to Theurgy alongside Philosophy. Interestingly, he does not explicitly follow Iamblichus' idea that there is a special level of supreme human virtue, the theurgic, which would imply that other humans are less virtuous than theurgists. But at the point where this might have been mentioned, he does allow that, while Philosophy makes us become intellect, Theurgy gives us union with the intelligibles (*Commentary on Phaedo*, Lecture 8, para 2, lines 1-20 Westerink).

This places Olympiodorus somewhere in between the Athenian followers of Iamblichus on the one hand and Plotinus and Porphyry on the other. Plotinus does not speak of Theurgy. Porphyry, in *On the Return of the Soul*,

held, according to Augustine, that Theurgy merely purifies the imagination and so helps us to see visions, but does *not* purify intellect, and so cannot lead us to God (Augustine *City of God* 10.9, *CCL* 47, lines 13-35). Porphyry *Against the Christians*, fr. 76 Harnack, denies it matters what names you give to the gods. It is Porphyry's idea of humans 'imposing' names that Ammonius follows. Iamblichus, Syrianus and Proclus, then, should not be seen as the mainstream in Neoplatonism, but only as one stream that went in a different direction. Even one of Iamblichus' pupils, Theodore of Asine, refused to follow Iamblichus' acceptance of the *Chaldaean Oracles*, and Damascius, though admiring of Iamblichus' theology, is very critical of Proclus. Once this variety is taken into account, we can see Ammonius as returning to a position somewhere in between that of the Athenians and that of Plotinus. He was not obliged to see himself as betraying Neoplatonism, but as returning to a middle position.

Now we must add in that Ammonius kept his school open for another century, while Damascius had his closed. There must be value in keeping one's school open, if it is not at the cost of betraying one's values.

In sum, I have claimed that there were differences between Ammonius' Alexandria and the Athenian followers of Iamblichus, but that they were primarily differences about the role of pagan religious practice in the teaching, with doctrinal differences as merely secondary.

Psychology

Four things are striking about Psychology in the commentators. First, the Neoplatonists saw it as a gateway to higher Metaphysics and Theology. Secondly, Plato and Aristotle disagreed more on this subject, perhaps, than on any other, so that harmonisation was all the more difficult. Thirdly, the commentators here went further beyond Plato and Aristotle than they did on any other subject, even though I think the advances they made in Physics were often more impressive ones. Fourthly, we have seen a Platonist tendency, unlike Aristotle's, to make reason permeate other mental functions – perception, self-perception and concept formation – even if the reason in question is sometimes empirically based.

The role of Psychology as the gateway to higher Metaphysics has been described above in connection with the radical inner turn taken by Neoplatonism – the adoption of 'Know Thyself' as starting point, and the injunction to look inwards for the Intellect and the One. The resulting Metaphysics, with its idea of a conscious universe descending from the divine One via the Intellect, is documented in **Logic and Metaphysics 13-18**.

In introducing the commentators' treatment of Psychology, I shall inevitably touch again on some of the themes already discussed, but I shall be putting them in the new context of what else was happening in Psychology. One of the subjects already discussed on which Plato and Aristotle disagree is the role of reason in sense perception. Plato, it will be remembered,

makes out that sense perception can grasp very little without reason and opinion. But Aristotle denies reason and rational opinion (*doxa*) to animals, and so allows a much richer content to their sense perception, and grants them also an informative faculty for grasping how things appear, *phantasia*, which, unlike Plato, he distinguishes sharply from rational *doxa*. In this controversy, Platonist commentators tend to side with Plato and make rational *doxa* indispensable at least for perceptual recognition. But modern psychological research favours Aristotle's idea that, long before rationality, the infant needs to see the world in relation to itself, so that it is better to think of perception itself as having a rich content.

The Platonist commentators develop Plato's insistence on reason by having sense perception involve the 'projection' of concepts from the mind for the purposes of recognition: imagination, linguistic communication, understanding and scientific study.

The commentators, starting with Alexander, also paved the way for the idea, which was made central to modern Philosophy of Mind by Franz Brentano, that sense perception has intentional objects. The commentators were wrestling with Aristotle's idea of the reception of form in sense perception. As I interpret it, the Aristotelian form received, for example in seeing, was not an intentional object, but a colour patch in the eye jelly. The commentators were worried, however, about collisions in mid air between such forms, which would lead to perceptual distortions. This led them to distinguish different degrees of spirituality versus materiality in the forms received by different senses. Further permutations in the commentaries of Avicenna and Thomas Aquinas led eventually to the notion of a merely intentional object of perception, which Brentano resuscitated from the Scholastic tradition.

Like the concept of perception, the concept of *phantasia* also grows in the Platonist commentators. In Aristotle, and in the Stoics and the Sceptics of earlier centuries, it is used much more often for a faculty of grasping how things *appear* to be. But with these commentators, it takes on more and more roles of the imagination. The roles are not always familiar nowadays. They include doing geometry, foreseeing the future, receiving visions from the gods, and influencing bodily appearance in the case of ghosts, daemons and offspring conceived.

Plato's *Charmides* had set a problem about how self-thinking, or self-seeing would be possible. He raises a question whether any such reflexive operation would turn out to have no content. Plotinus hopes that we can avoid this difficulty by invoking Aristotle's idea that there is an identity, in the case of an immaterial thinker, between thinker and object thought.

But Plotinus does not believe that such self-thinking on the part of our intellect means that we ourselves are conscious of its thinking. Indeed, he is a philosopher of the unconscious, insisting that our intellect is uninterruptedly thinking the world of Platonic Forms, but that it takes special effort for us to become conscious of its activity.

Aristotle, as already explained, had assigned consciousness of the opera-

tion of our five senses to the common sense, meaning to sense perception taken in its more general role, not as one or other of the five special senses. But, we saw, the Neoplatonist commentators are concerned that we not only perceive, but also think and desire. What is it that can be conscious of this great variety of mental activities, as something must be, if the *unity* of the person is to be maintained? Surely something higher than the common sense is needed, perhaps reason itself. An alternative is that Aristotle's common sense can still be invoked, provided it is regarded as permeated by reason. This permeation across the boundaries of his taxonomy would have appalled Aristotle. But it provides a Platonist way of overcoming the severe restriction imposed by Plato's *Theaetetus* on the content of sense perception, as well as helping with the problems of self-awareness. Other commentators thought that we should postulate a special part of the soul, the attentive part (*prosektikon*) as the agent of self-awareness.

An interesting legacy of Plato's *First Alcibiades* is the idea that one knows oneself best through the eyes of another. This, too, has its counterpart in modern psychological research, where the infant is said to need to see its carer as attending to it, both for its own security and eventually for developing a concept of self. This modern research however relates more closely to a different set of ideas, those of the Stoics on the chick's knowledge of its own person as depending on its knowledge of its predators.

Plato and Aristotle, we have seen, disagreed on concept-formation. Do we recollect concepts from a life before birth, and store them in our intellect, as Plato claimed, or do we gain concepts empirically in Aristotle's manner? Some Platonists achieved harmonisation here by saying we do both (**5(d)** below), some by ascribing both views to Aristotle (**5(c)**). Some accepted Aristotle's remark that perception can grasp universal concepts, but regarded them as confused concepts awaiting the clarifying work of reason (**5(b)**). Aristotle himself allows a role to intellect (*nous*) in concept formation, but this was elaborated by the commentators into a theory of three different kinds of intellect playing different roles (**3(g)**(4)-(13)). The role of storing images would have been assigned by Aristotle to imagination, not to intellect, but some commentators were again willing to allow an un-Aristotelian overlap, equating imagination with a lower kind of intellect (**3(j)**). The role of the highest kind, the active intellect, is obscure in Aristotle, but several commentators connect it too with concept formation (**3(g)**(4)-(13)).

But what is this active intellect? Is it part of the human soul, so that Aristotle can be harmonised with Plato as believing in the immortality of the human soul? Or is it rather, as was said in Aristotle's own school by Alexander, merely God resident in us?

If we are immortal, what can we expect to remember after death, and can we expect to recognise each other, if we have very different bodies, or look-alike bodies, or all have the same thoughts, or have even escaped from time?

Another psychological problem, stemming from Plato's *First Alcibiades*,

is reserved for **Logic and Metaphysics 17-18**. If we have a true self, is this something highly individual, or something common to all of us? As we have seen, the origins of the great Averroist controversy of the thirteenth century about whether our immortal intellect is individualised were laid down by Plato and agonisingly discussed by Plotinus, before Themistius supplied the answer that Thomas Aquinas found acceptable, that our intellects are individual.

Concerning soul-body relations, Plato regards the soul as imperceptible, but as nonetheless moving in space. That way he was able to explain the powerful effect of bodily movements on our psyche. But the Neoplatonists would do almost anything to avoid admitting that Plato intended spatial soul movements, and suggested imaginative non-spatial relations between body and soul, which Christians found applicable to relations within the divine Trinity. Alexander was on the same side as the Neoplatonists in rejecting the medical view of Galen that the soul was just the 'blend' (our 'temperament') of ingredients in the body. And there were attempts to say that states of mind '*supervened*' on, rather than '*following*' from, the bodily blends. When Augustine repeats the attack on the idea that the soul is a body, or a blend in our bodies, in *On the Trinity*, he innovates by employing the *Cogito* argument later borrowed by Descartes, to show that the soul is neither of these. Part of his discussion in *On the Trinity* of the soul-body relation is drawn from now fragmentary work by Porphyry. And there may have been a background in Porphyry for his appeal to the *Cogito* to establish the incorporeality of soul.

To maintain the soul's immunity from spatial movement, the commentators found Aristotle a clearer source than Plato. A discussion by Alexander of its immobility is included in fragments of his lost *Physics* commentary, recently discovered by Marwan Rashed and to be translated in the series *Ancient Commentators on Aristotle*. The new fragments, as Rashed shows, reveal that our previous source, a report on Alexander's commentary by Simplicius, was not wholly reliable.

Philoponus, in his commentaries, makes knowledge of other minds depend on the effect of the soul on the body, in the case of recognising whether someone has understood. Plotinus explains sympathy very differently, as depending on the original unity of all souls. Knowledge of other minds was also discussed by the Platonists and the Christians in very varied contexts. How do souls after death recognise each other? By their vehicles. How do gods hear our prayers? By the marks they have installed in us. Can demons see into our minds? On one view only through our speech and gesture.

The Stoic ideal of freedom from emotion (*apatheia*) was taken over by some of the Christian desert fathers, who experimented on what humans could achieve and tested human possibilities to the limit. It was also taken over as an ideal for philosophers by the Neoplatonists, as against the Aristotelian ideal of moderate emotion, which they viewed as an earlier stage to be reached first by philosophers or philosophy students. Porphyry

sought to achieve this ideal by the avoidance of all temptation, including those induced by a meat diet. But Plato (*Laws* 647D) spoke up for the need to avoid inexperience, and Porphyry's pupil Iamblichus defended at least for non-philosophers, the shouting of erotic words at festivals partly on the unexpected ground that this could moderate emotion by the Aristotelian method of *catharsis*. This is the fullest surviving discussion of catharsis in the six and a half hundred years since Aristotle put it forward as the beneficial function of tragedy, comedy and orgiastic dancing.

Even believers in freedom from emotion want to argue the case for exceptions. The Stoics regarded pleasure as an emotion. But what about pleasure in intellectual things? There was a problem here because Plato at one stage had defined pleasure as a process of restoring the natural state, while Aristotle insisted it was not a process towards a goal, but an activity of something already in its natural state. Gerd van Riel has brought out that some Neoplatonists were embarrassed to describe enjoyment of intellectual contemplation as pleasure, because it does not fit the *process* model. They therefore borrowed terms for the equanimous states of *eupatheia*, which the Stoics had earlier introduced when they, too, wanted to allow some emotions after all. But Damascius, more boldly, switched to the Aristotelian definition of pleasure as not a process at all, in accommodating intellectual pleasures.

Plotinus considered that for the highest realities words were inadequate. He praised Egyptian hieroglyphs or ideograms for what he took to be a purely pictorial presentation of realities that bypassed words all together. He thereby unwittingly helped to retard the modern decipherment of Egyptian hieroglyphics. But he stands at the beginning of a tradition that culminates in Schopenhauer's insisting that only music, not words, can express the deepest realities.

The last two chapters of this volume move from Psychology to the related fields of Ethics and Religious Practice. Most fascinating under Religious Practice is the confrontation between Porphyry and his probable pupil Iamblichus on Egyptian religion. Porphyry is full of doubts about the propriety and feasibility of these practices. Iamblichus, as already mentioned, gives unexpected explanations, which seek to account for the practices at a loftier and less physical level than Porphyry envisaged. The subjects of Ethics and Religious Practice overlap, e.g. in connection with the sacrificial killing of animals and the relations between suicide and martyrdom.

As regards Ethics, the Neoplatonists recognised different levels of virtue, but all except the lowest level, civic virtue, were other-worldly virtues concerned with the salvation of the soul. This is an answer to the problem discussed by Plato and Aristotle, to what extent one should live the life of contemplation, and to what extent return to the cave and the social virtues.

The earlier commentators, who came from Aristotle's school, wrote commentaries on his *Nicomachean Ethics* and Alexander wrote a set of *Ethical Problems*. But we have no commentaries on the *Ethics* (that of

Porphyry is lost) from the Neoplatonists of the period up to 600 AD, only much later ones from the twelfth century. The Neoplatonists thought students should study Aristotle's Ethics, but, since it presupposed his Logic, there was a need for a more elementary pre-logical Ethics course. Accordingly, we possess Simplicius' commentary on the Stoic Epictetus, although Simplicius' understanding of Stoicism is very weak compared with his understanding of Aristotle (I. Hadot, ed., *Simplicius Commentaire sur le Manuel d'Epictète*, Budé edition, vol. 1, 2001, Introduction, ch. 4).

More than usual, then, the texts on Ethics do not come from commentaries on Aristotle. Nonetheless, the discussions on suicide do come from introductions to the commentaries on his Logic for a curious reason, namely that those introductions had to discuss Socrates' insistence in Plato's *Phaedo* 64A that the philosopher is practising death. The debates on how evil can exist in a world governed by divine Providence tend to come from specialised treatises on the subject like those of Plotinus and Proclus. What we nowadays call environmental ethics concerning the treatment of animals and the earth related to views about the soul. Porphyry's protest against killing animals turned partly on his attributing reason to them. Porphyry's treatise on animals also approves the Aristotelian Theophrastus' injunction that we should hymn the earth as our mother, and this view was all the more congenial to Neoplatonists who, unlike Aristotelians, accorded the earth a soul.

Only some of Aristotle's (and of Plato's) works were included in the curriculum in our period and received commentaries and Michael of Ephesus was set in the twelfth century by Princess Anna Comnena to fill some of the gaps. We do not have commentaries from 200 to 600 AD on Aristotle's biological works, nor on his *Poetics* or *Rhetoric*. Curiously, even a member of his school, Aspasius in the second century AD can write on Aristotle's treatment of emotions without showing knowledge of the longest discussion of emotion, which comes from Book 2 of the *Rhetoric*. But Neoplatonists were expected to know far more than they commented on, and Olympiodorus under **13(i)** reflects some knowledge of the *Rhetoric*, as Iamblichus does of the *Poetics*. As for the *Politics*, the only part commented on was Aristotle's attack on Plato's ideas on civic unity. Proclus' discussion of that is included under **17(h)**.

Further psychological themes are discussed in **Logic and Metaphysics 3(t)**, **6(h)**, **7(n)**, **15**, **16**, **17** and **18**.

Notes

1. H. Usener, *Göttingische gelehrte Anzeigen* 26, 1892, pp. 1001-22. K. Praechter, *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 18, 1909, 516-38, translated into English in Richard Sorabji, ed., *Aristotle Transformed*, London & Ithaca, NY 1990, ch. 2.

2. Now in English: Olympiodorus *in Gorg.* (Jackson, Lycos, Tarrant); Calcidius *in Tim.* (partly in van Winden, den Boeft); Iamblichus fragments (Dillon); Proclus *in Crat.* in preparation (Duvick); Proclus *in Tim.* (Taylor); Proclus *in Tim.* forthcoming (Tarrant, Runia, Baltzly); Proclus *in Parm.* (Morrow, Dillon); Proclus *in Parm.*

end of book 7 from Latin (Klibansky, Labowsky, Anscombe); Proclus *in Alcib. 1* (O'Neill); Olympiodorus and Damascius *in Phaed.* (Westerink); Damascius *in Phileb.* (Westerink); *Anonymous Prolegomena to Platonic Philosophy* (Westerink). See also extracts in Thomas Taylor, *The Works of Plato*, 5 vols (1804). French: Proclus *in Tim.* (Festugière); Proclus *in Remp.* (Festugière); Proclus *in Parm.* (Chaignet); Proclus *in Tim.* in preparation, new edition (Opsomer); Proclus *in Alcib. 1* (new edition by Segonds); *Anon. in Parm.* (Hadot); Damascius *in Parm.* (Chaignet, new edition by Westerink, Combès).

3. So H.J. Blumenthal, 'Plotinus in later Platonism', in H.J. Blumenthal and R.A. Markus, eds, *Neoplatonism and Early Christian Thought*, London 1981, 215; 217 and in 'Neoplatonic elements in the *de Anima* commentators', *Phronesis* 21, 1976, 64-87, repr. in Richard Sorabji, ed., *Aristotle Transformed*, London & Ithaca, NY 1990, see 312-13.

4. By John Sellars in Peter Adamson, Han Baltussen, Martin Stone, eds, *Philosophy, Science and Exegesis in Greek, Arabic and Latin Commentaries, Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies*, supp. vol. 2004, forthcoming.

5. Angelos Chaniotis, 'New inscriptions from Aphrodisias', *American Journal of Archaeology*, forthcoming.

6. *In Metaph.* 206,12-207,4 is cited by Arthur Madigan, 'Alexander on Aristotle's species and genera as principles', in Lawrence P. Schrenk, ed., *Aristotle in Late Antiquity*, Washington DC 1994, 76-91, and Alexander is elsewhere ready to complain of fallacy (*paragôgê*) in Aristotle.

7. Polymnia Athanassiadi, *Damascius. The Philosophical History*, Athens 1999.

8. Michel Tardieu, *Les paysages reliques: routes et haltes syriennes d'Isidore à Simplicius*, Leuven 1990.

Michel Tardieu, 'Sabiens coraniques et "sabiens" de Harran', *Journal Asiatique* 274, 1986, 1-44.

Michel Tardieu, 'Les calendriers en usage à Harran d'après les sources arabes et le commentaire de Simplicius à la Physique d'Aristote' in I. Hadot, ed., *Simplicius, sa vie, son œuvre, sa survie*, Berlin & New York 1987, 40-57.

I. Hadot, 'La vie et l'œuvre de Simplicius d'après des sources grecques et arabes', in I. Hadot, ed., *Simplicius, sa vie, son œuvre, sa survie*, Berlin & New York 1987, 3-39, in English in Richard Sorabji, ed., *Aristotle Transformed*, London & Ithaca NY 1990.

I. Hadot, *Simplicius. Commentaire sur le Manuel d'Epictète*, Leiden 1996, ch. 2.

One part of Tardieu's evidence concerning calendars has been attacked, with reply in I. Hadot 1996, by Paul Foulkes, 'Where was Simplicius?', *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 112, 1992, 143; S. van Riet, 'À propos de la biographie de Simplicius', *Revue Philosophique de Louvain* 89, 1991, 506-14. There is further disagreement in Concetta Luna, *Mnemosyne* 54, 2001, 482-504, reviewing a restatement of Tardieu's theory by R. Thiel.

Objections to the Arabic evidence, though still needing further assessment, are made by Joep Lameer, 'From Alexandria to Baghdad: reflections on the genesis of a problematical tradition', in G. Endress, R. Kruk, eds, *The Ancient Tradition in Christian and Islamic Hellenism*, CNWS publications, Leiden University, Leiden 1997, 181-91.

For the excavation of the possible school houses of Proclus and of Damascius in Athens, both abandoned by their pagan occupants, see Alison Frantz, 'Pagan philosophers in Christian Athens', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 119, 1975, 29-38; Polymnia Athanassiadi, *Damascius. The Philosophical History*, Athens 1999, Appendix I.

9. Carlos Steel, 'Plato Latinus (1939-1989)', in *Rencontres de cultures dans la philosophie médiévale: traductions et traducteurs de l'antiquité tardive du XIVe*

siècle, Louvain-la neuve, 1990, 301-16, contrasts the reception in Latin of Plato and of Aristotle.

10. See H.D. Saffrey, 'How did Syrianus regard Aristotle?', translated from the French of 1987, in Richard Sorabji, ed., *Aristotle Transformed*, London & Ithaca, NY 1990; Carlos Steel, 'Why should we prefer Plato's *Timaeus* to Aristotle's *Physics*? Proclus' critique of Aristotle's causal explanation of the physical world', in Robert Sharples, Anne Sheppard, eds, *Ancient Approaches to Plato's Timaeus, Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* suppl. vol. 78, 2003.

11. For the following, see:

Karl Praechter, 'Richtungen und Schulen im Neuplatonismus', *Genethliakon für Carl Robert*, Berlin 1910, 'Christlich-neuplatonische Beziehungen', *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 21, 1912.

H.D. Saffrey, 'Le Chrétien Jean Philopon et la survivance de l'école d'Alexandrie', in *Revue des Études Grecques* 67, 1954, 400-1.

L.G. Westerink, 'The Alexandrian commentators and the introductions to their commentaries', in Richard Sorabji, ed., *Aristotle Transformed*, London & Ithaca, NY 1990, ch. 14, 327, revised from *Anonymous Prolegomena to Platonic Philosophy*, Amsterdam 1962, Introd., xxxiiff.

A.C. Lloyd, 'The later Neoplatonists', in A.H. Armstrong, ed., *The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy*, Cambridge 1970, 316.

I. Hadot, *Le problème du néoplatonisme Alexandrin: Hiéroclès et Simplicius*, Paris 1978.

Koenraad Verrycken, 'The metaphysics of Ammonius son of Hermeias', in Richard Sorabji, ed., *Aristotle Transformed*, London & Ithaca, NY 1990, ch. 10.

Richard Sorabji, 'The ancient commentators on Aristotle', in Richard Sorabji, ed., *Aristotle Transformed*, London & Ithaca, NY 1990, ch. 1, 12.

12. Polymnia Athanassiadi, *Damascius. The Philosophical History*, 30-2; Richard Sorabji, 'Divine names and sordid deals in Ammonius' Alexandria', in Andrew Smith, ed., *Neoplatonism and Society*, Cardiff 2004.

13. Anne Sheppard, 'Proclus' philosophical method of exegesis: the use of Aristotle and the Stoics in the Commentary on the *Cratylus*', in J. Pépin, H.-D. Saffrey, eds, *Proclus, Lecteur et interprète des anciens*, Paris 1987, 137-51.

14. On Origen see John Dillon, 'The magical power of names in Origen and later Platonism', in R. Hanson, H. Crouzel, eds, *Origeniana Tertia*, Rome 1985, 203-16; J. Daniélou, 'Eunome l'Arien et l'exégèse neoplatonicienne du *Cratyle*', in *Revue des Études Grecques* 69, 1956, 412-32.

15. Robbert van den Berg, 'Smoothing over the differences: Proclus and Ammonius on Plato's *Cratylus* and Aristotle's *De Interpretatione*', in Peter Adamson, Han Baltussen, Martin Stone, eds, *Philosophy, Science and Exegesis in Greek, Arabic and Latin Commentaries*, Institute of Classical Studies, suppl. vol., London 2004.

16. Philippe Hoffmann, 'Simplicius' polemics', in Richard Sorabji, ed., *Philoponus and the Rejection of Aristotelian Science*, London & Ithaca, NY 1987, ch. 3 at p. 72.

1. Perception

1(a) Does perceptual recognition require opinion (*doxa*) and empirically based reason (*logos*)?

Not according to Aristotle, for whom opinion is a rational faculty which animals lack (*DA* 3.3, 428a22-4, translated in 2 below), whereas animals by definition have perception (*DA* 2.3), and through perception the lion can perceive that the ox is near (*EN* 3.10, 1118a20-3). Plato had agreed that perception is distinct from reason and belief, but not that it can achieve much without them. In Plato *Theaetetus* 186A-187A, perception can grasp only, for example, whiteness, but not being and truth. Being (*ousia*), 186C and E, may be taken to include the idea that something *is* white. The latter requires reasoning (*sullogismos* 186D) and belief or opinion (*doxazein* 187A), which, in some texts, Plato allows to animals. Here, however, he denies it, at least to newborn animals and children, to whom he grants only perception.

(1) Plato *Theaetetus* 186B-187A

Socrates: Hold on. Surely the soul will perceive the hardness of what is hard through touch, and likewise the softness of what is soft?

Theaetetus: Yes.

Soc: But the being (*ousia*) of them, and that they are, and their oppositeness to one another, and again the being of the oppositeness, the soul, by going over and comparing them to one another, will try to determine for us by itself.

Theaet: Certainly.

Soc: So some things are there for man and beast (*thêria*) to perceive by nature as soon as they are born, all the affections (*pathêmata*) which reach the soul through the body. But calculations (*analogismata*) concerning these things, as regards their being (*ousia*) and their benefit, come to those to whom (*hois an*) they come with difficulty and over time, and with much effort and education (*paideia*)?

Theaet: Absolutely.

Soc: So is it possible for someone who does not even find being, to find truth?

Theaet: Impossible.

Soc: And will anyone ever know a thing if he does not find its truth?

Theaet: Of course not, Socrates.

Soc: Then knowledge is not in the affections, but in the reasoning (*sullogismos*) about them. For it is here, so it seems, that it is possible to grasp being and truth, not there.

Theaet: Evidently.

Soc: So do you call the two cases the same, when they have such great differences?
Theaet: That would not be right.
Soc: What name do you give to the one case – seeing, hearing, smelling, feeling cold, feeling warm?
Theaet: I call it perceiving. What else?
Soc: Then taken together you call it all perception?
Theaet: Necessarily.
Soc: Perception has no share in grasping truth, since it has no share in grasping being (*ousia*).
Theaet: Indeed not.
Soc: Then it has no share in knowledge.
Theaet: No.
Soc: Then perception and knowledge could never be the same thing, Theaetetus.
Theaet: Evidently not, Socrates. Now above all it has become absolutely clear that knowledge is something other than perception. RW
Soc: But we began discussing not to find out what knowledge is not, but what it is. Nonetheless, we have at least progressed far enough not to seek it at all in perception, but in the name of whatever the soul has, when it is occupied by itself concerning beings.
Theaet: Yes, and I think, Socrates, that is called opining (*doxazein*). RRKS

Alcinous, the Middle Platonist author of the *Didaskalikos* in the first to second century AD, takes Plato to hold that even perception of colour or of the coloured is 'not without the kind of reason that involves opinion (*doxastikos logos*)', while discrimination of honey is by that kind of reason. Opinion in Alcinous, following Plato *Theaetetus* 190E-196C is a power of recognition. It was subsequently agreed that bodies are recognised by opinion (Proclus) or opiniative reason (Priscian).

How can it be that colour and the coloured are perceived 'not without the aid of *doxastikos logos*', given that Alcinous tells us in 154,40-155,5 that *doxastikos logos* is itself derived from sense perceptions? The answer seems to be given in the same passage. *Doxastikos logos* is needed not for simple seeing, but for 'saying within ourselves 'Socrates!', 'Horse!', 'Fire!', in other words for recognising, since this requires us to connect (*suntithenai*) new perceptions with old.

The recognition of things like Socrates, horse, fire, or honey is the most demanding because honey is not merely colour or coloured, but is a bundle (*athroisma*) that includes also e.g. sweetness and the sweet (based on Plato *Theaetetus* 156D-157C), so *doxastikos logos* has still more connecting to do among the members of the bundle. For more on opiniative reason, see **3(c)**.

(2) Alcinous *Didaskalikos* ch. 4, 154,25-9

This latter [reason (*logos*)], too, has two aspects: one concerned with the objects of intellection, the other with the objects of sensation. Of these, the former, that concerning the objects of intellection, is science (*epistêmê*) and

scientific reason (*epistêmonikos logos*), while that concerning sense-objects is opinion (*doxa*), and opiniative reason (*doxastikos logos*). JD

(3) Alcinous *Didaskalikos* 156,1-6

And in turn, since of sense-objects some are primary, such as qualities, e.g. colour, or whiteness, and others accidental, such as 'white' or 'coloured', and following on these the bundle (*athroisma*), such as fire or honey [cf. Plato *Theaetetus* 156D-157C], even so there will be one sort of sense perception concerned with the primary objects, called 'primary', and another concerned with secondary, called 'secondary'. JD

(4) Alcinous *Didaskalikos* 156,8-11

The primary and secondary sensibles are judged (*krinein*) by sense-perception not without the aid of opiniative reason (*doxastikos logos*), while the bundle (*athroisma*) is judged by opiniative reason, not without the aid of sense-perception [cf. Plato *Timaeus* 28A]. JD

(5) Alcinous *Didaskalikos* 154,40-155,5

Opinion is the combination of memory and perception. For when we first encounter some perceptible, and from it we get a perception, and from that a memory, and later we encounter the same perceptible again, we connect the pre-existing memory with the subsequent perception and say within ourselves 'Socrates!', 'Horse!', 'Fire!', etc. And this is called opinion (*doxa*) – our connecting (*suntithenai*) the pre-existing perception with the newly produced perception. DNS

(6) Proclus *in Tim.* 1.249,13-27 Diehl

In general, each of the senses recognises the effect produced in the animal from the sense object. For example, when an apple is presented, sight recognises that it is red from the effect in the eye, smell recognises that it is fragrant from the effect in the nostrils, taste that it is sweet and touch that it is smooth. But what is it that says that this thing presented is an apple? It is not one of the particular senses, since each of these recognises [only] one of its features, not the whole. Nor is it the common [i.e. generic] sense, since this discriminates only the differences among qualitative effects, but does not know that the whole has such and such an essence. It is clear, then, that there is some capacity superior to the senses which recognises the whole before what might be called parts, and sees its form without dividing it into parts, and holds the many [cognitive] capacities together. Plato has called this capacity opinion (*doxa*) and what is perceived through it an object of opinion. RRKS

(7) Proclus *in Tim.* 1.292,27-293,5 Diehl

And that is why it does not seem to me sufficient to show [Plato *Tim.* 28B7-C2] that [the world] is generated by its being an object of perception, but one needs also to add that it is an object of opinion (*doxa*). For perception knows (*ginôskein*) the *activities* of perceptibles through being affected by them, but opinion gets to know their being (*ousiai*) too; for it has preconceived (*proeilêphê*) their concepts (*logoi*). Hence so that he may show that the being of perceptibles is generated, he has begun his argument from their being objects of opinion. RRKS

(8) Priscian *Metaphrasis in Theophrastum CAG* Suppl. 1.2, 19,9-13

Every body would seem to be [known] by its qualities and differences. Or [rather] every body is known (*gnôston*) not by perception alone but also by opiniative reason (*doxastikos logos*). For it is known by opinion (*doxa*) with perception according to Plato [*Timaeus* 28A], and it is opinion that grasps corporeal being (*ousia*) [Plato *Theaetetus* 186B-187A, translated above]. RRKS

So far, *doxa* has been required to supplement sense perception, but Proclus goes further and makes *doxa* and *logos* penetrate perception. At *in Tim.* 1.251,16-17, *doxa is* rationalised (*logikê*) perception. (See also **1(i)** for his putting intellect into perception at *Platonic Theology* Saffrey-Westerink vol. 3, 23,25-24,2. And see under **4(c)** for Priscian, *Metaphrasis* 21,32-22,33; 'Simplicius' *in DA* 187,27-188,35; 173,3-7 on rationality permeating the common sense.)

(9) Proclus *in Tim.* 1.248,25-9

Opinion (*doxa*) has a knowledge [of sensibles] that is free from being passively affected. Perception partakes in a way of this passivity, yet also has a certain cognitivity, insofar as it is seated in the opinionative (*doxastikon*) [part of the soul] and is illuminated by that, and becomes like reason (*logoeidês*), although irrational in itself. RRKS

Philoponus allows a dog to recognise its master without perceiving him as a *substance*, which would, according to Proclus in (7) above, require *doxa*. On the contrary, the dog requires only imprints in its imagination (cf. Seneca *Ep.* 124,16, Galen *Meth. Med.* Kühn 10, 132-4; 138-9), and Philoponus recognises the importance of emotional attachment in recognition (cf. Herstein and Ramachandran, *Proceedings of the Royal Society, Biological Sciences* 264, 1997, 437-44).

(10) Philoponus *in DA* 317,25-32

Someone might raise the inquiry: if the incidental sense objects are substances and reason alone knows these using sense as an instrument , which is why in general they are actually called incidental sense objects, how does

the dog know its master and the ass its manger and anything else of that kind that is seen with non-rational [animals]? I say that they do not perceive them as *substances*, but because such shapes become dear or painful to sense, they recognise (*gnôrizein*) them by having the imprints of them in imagination. WC

Modern infant psychology supports Aristotle's idea that the animal or infant can perceive that the ox is near without using reason. Before an infant could be said to have anything as sophisticated as reasoning or beliefs, it sees its carer as responding to it conversationally, and objects as moving in relation to itself, and as within its reach or not. On one view, it can do this without having any *concept* of self (see e.g. J.L. Bermúdez, *The Paradox of Self-Consciousness*, Cambridge, Mass. 1998). But see **5(b)** below for an interpretation of Aristotle which allows to infants concepts involving remembered perceptions without reason.

Reading

Larry Schrenk, 'A note on *athroisma* in *Didaskalikos* 4.7', *Hermes* 119, 1991, 497-500.

Larry Schrenk, 'Faculties of judgment in the *Didaskalikos*', *Mnemosyne* 44, 1991, 347-63.

David Sedley, 'Alcinous' epistemology', in Keimpe A. Algra, Pieter W. van der Horst, David T. Runia, eds, *Polyhistor: Studies Presented to Jaap Mansfeld*, Leiden 1996, 300-12.

Richard Sorabji, *Animal Minds and Human Morals*, London & Ithaca, NY 1993, chs 1-3.

1(b) Perceptual recognition and judgment is an active process which requires concepts and the projection of concepts

The Stoics define reason (*logos*) as a collection of concepts and preconceptions (*ennoiai, prolêpseis*, Galen *PHP* 5.3 = *SVF* 2.841). Neoplatonists sometimes used the plural, *logoi*, which in its more general use means any kind of rational principle, for *concepts*, that had to be deployed or projected (*proballein, proballesthai*) for the purpose of perceptual judgment (*krinein, krisis*), recognition (*gnôrisis*) and understanding (*sunesis*). The reception of data from the external world is not enough for this purpose, although it was debated whether animals could manage more than this (see Sorabji, *Animal Minds and Human Morals*). Whether the concepts projected are empirically gained, like the *doxastikos logos* discussed above by Alcinous and Priscian, or whether they are innate concepts recollected in Plato's manner, is not made particularly clear. Peter Lautner has pointed out that at Proclus *in Tim.* 1,223,16-26 it is the recollected concepts, because scientific distinctions are there being projected by discursive thought (*dianoia*), and we shall see in **3(c)** that Proclus is following the treatment of recollected concepts in Alcinous *Didaskalikos* ch. 4. But it would be interesting to know whether opinion (*doxa*) can also project the concepts (*logoi*) which Proclus says it has of perceptibles at *in Tim.* 1,293,3, translated in **1(a)**. I am not clear whether at Hermeias *in Phaedr.* 171,16-25, translated in **Logic and Metaphysics 5(c)**, an empirically gained concept of equal is said to be projected.

Porphyry *On Ptolemy's Harmonics* adds that reason (*logos*) with its concepts can correct inaccuracies in sensory information. Elsewhere it is suggested that in geometry our innate concepts can be used to correct our empirically gained ones, Syrianus *in Metaph.* 95,29-36; Proclus *in Eucl. I* 12,9-13,26; Olympiodorus *in*

Phaed. Lecture 12.1, 9-25 Westerink. The second of these passages is translated below under **2(i)**.

Aristotle, as claimed above in **1(a)**, allows rudimentary concepts to animals. For his theory of concept formation and his remark at *An. Post.* 2.19, 100a17, that after all perception is of the universal, see **5(b)** below; for commentators proposing pre-nate concepts as well as, or instead of, Aristotle's empirically gained ones, **5(d)** below; for the ascription by Iamblichus and Philoponus to Aristotle of pre-nate concepts, **3(i)**(3) and **5(c)** below.

Reading

Aristotle: Richard Sorabji, *Animal Minds and Human Morals*, London & Ithaca, NY 1993, ch. 3.

In Plotinus the appeal to concepts is still limited. He speaks of the need to employ concepts already available in the intellect for recognising instances of beauty (1.6 [1] 3) or goodness (5.3 [49] 3) or fire (6.7 [38] 6). He also says that discursive reason uses forms (*eidê*) which it has in itself, to pass judgement (*epikrisis*) on images provided by sense perception, 1.1 [53] 9 (18-20). In perceiving fire, one fits what one receives to fire in the world of Forms, 6.7 [38] 6 (1-7). But for recognising Socrates (5.3 [49] 3), although discursive reason (*dianoia*) is needed, it relies only on memory and on analysing the data stored in images (*phantasia*).

(1) Plotinus 1.6 [1] 3 (3-15) (on perception of beauty)

Perhaps the soul speaks, fitting (*sunarmottein*) Beauty to the Form (*eidos*) within itself, using this to make its judgment (*krisis*) as we use a ruler to judge straightness. But how can the bodily be consonant with what is prior to body? How does the builder, fitting the house in front of him with the inner Form of the house, declare that the former is beautiful? The answer is that the house in front of him, if you separate it from its material, is the inner Form when it is divided by the mass of external matter, undivided yet envisaged in multiplicity. Just so, when our sense perception sees the Form instantiated in bodies, binding and constraining the opposing nature which is shapeless, and shape splendidly riding on other shapes, it brings together the very thing that is fragmented, and conducts it back and conveys it inside itself as something now undivided, and presents it to what is within as something harmonious (*sunarmotton*), fitting and friendly. BF

(2) Plotinus 6.7 [38] 6 (1-7)

How then is there perceptual capacity in the better soul? It would be a capacity for perceiving the sense objects There [sc. in the intelligible world], and would be such as the sense objects There. And that is also why the better soul perceives perceptible harmony (*harmonia*) as follows. The man of sense perception receives it by sense and fits (*sunarmozein*) it to the bottom level of the harmony which is There. Fire fits (*enarmozein*) with the fire There, a fire which that [better] soul perceived in a way analogous to the nature of the fire There. RRKS

(3) Plotinus 1.1 [53] 9 (18-21)

Discursive reason (*dianoia*), when it makes a judgement (*epikrisis*) on the imprints (*tupoi*) from sense perception, is already contemplating forms (*eidê*), and contemplating them by a sort of self-awareness (*sunaisthêsis*). At least discursive reason properly speaking, which belongs to the true soul, does this. RRKS

(4) Plotinus 5.3 [49] 2 (9-14)

In the case of what comes from intellect, the soul sees a sort of imprint (*tupos*), and has the same power concerning the imprints. It gets further understanding (*sunesis*), as if by recognising (*epiginôskein*) and fitting (*epharmozein*) the newly arrived imprints to those that were in it from long ago. We might call this the soul's being reminded (*anamnêseis*). RRKS

(5) Plotinus 5.3 [49] 3 (1-9)

Sense perception saw a man and gave the imprint (*tupos*) to discursive reason (*dianoia*). What does discursive reason say? It will not yet say anything, but only notices and halts, unless it were to calculate to itself 'Who is this?', if it had encountered this man before, and were to say, using its memory, that it is Socrates. But if it were also to explicate Socrates' shape, it will be taking to pieces what imagination (*phantasia*) gave it. And if it were to say whether Socrates is good, though it would have spoken on the basis of what it noticed through sense perception, what it said about that it would have from itself, since it has in itself a criterion (*kanôn*) of goodness. RRKS

(6) Porphyry *Sentences* 16 p. 7,3-8 Lamberz

The soul contains the concepts (*logoi*) of all things, but it acts according to them [only] by either being provoked to take them in hand (*prokheirêsis*) by some external stimulus or through directing itself towards them inwardly. And when it is provoked by an external influence, as it were outwards, it produces sense perceptions, while when it withdraws into itself in the direction of intellect, it finds itself in the process of intelligising. JD

(7) Porphyry *On Ptolemy's Harmonics* 14,32-15,6 Düring

For perception is a material and passive criterion, while reason (*logos*) is a formal one and the cause from which motion and being come; on that account sensation, in judging (*krinein*) by its affection and materially, apprehends things approximately and to the extent that the sense object makes its mark upon it, and signals no more than this, while reason (*logos*), in operating at a formal and immaterial level, is found to have precon-

ceived (*proeilêphôs*) the whole of what is being judged and virtually to possess accurately within itself the form (*eidos*) of what is investigated – more accurately than when it is observed among sensible objects. And so reason actually supplies what is missing from it [the form as supplied by the senses] and corrects what is not quite right; but it would not be able to do this if it did not have prior possession of it. HT

The use of projection in perception is below connected with Iamblichus. The effect is that the later Neoplatonists side with Plato's decision in *Theaetetus* 186-7 to assign most of the work to reason and against Aristotle's wish to expand the content of sense perception. But they defend Plato by a theory of projecting recollected concepts of which Plato himself never dreamed.

For the projection of thoughts (*ennoiai*) in linguistic understanding see **Logic and Metaphysics 7(h)**, for projection of concepts (*logoi*) in geometry **2(i)** below and **Logic and Metaphysics 5(c)**; **12(b)**, for the same in imagination **2(f)** below; cf. **2(h)**, for projection of rehearsed knowledge in memory **2(f)** and for projection of scientific distinctions and recollected concepts **3(c)**. The idea stretches from Porphyry in the third century to Priscian, who may be identical with 'Simplicius', author of *in DA*, in the sixth.

(8) Priscian *Metaphrasis in Theophrastum* 7,11-20 (reporting Iamblichus)

And let us add the observations we have made which are common to all sense perceptions: (a) the display (*emphasis*) of the sensed object in the sense organ which is constituted in the likeness of the sensed object by the passive effect (*peisis*) and the simultaneous activity [in the sense-organ]; (b) the display (*emphasis*) perfected into a form (*eidos*) in the common life of the compound being; and (c) the concept (*logos*) fitted to these forms which is projected (*proballesthai*) from the sensitive soul, by which judgment (*krisis*) and understanding (*sunesis*) occur. Such is the method of enquiry about each sense, which one must take over above all from the philosophical results of Iamblichus in his [books] *On the Soul*, from which we too now, wishing to sketch the outline of his precise enquiry about each [sense], have written these things briefly. PH

(9) 'Simplicius' *in DA* 124,34-125,2

[Aristotle *DA* 417b24 'But to perceive is not within [its] power']. He [Aristotle] means clearly '[not within the power of] the faculty of sense perception', because the sensible object, which is an individual and external, must be available, and must not merely be there but also present to the faculty of sense perception so that it may act in a way on the sense organ and upon its being acted on, the perceptive soul may project (*proballomenê*) the common concepts (*logoi*) within it of the sensible things in a way appropriate to the effect (*pathos*) and recognise (*gnôrizein*) the sensible object through its own activity, being in a state of accord with the form (*eidos*) of the sensible object. CS

(10) 'Simplicius' *in DA* 126,1-16

For perception indivisibly encompasses the beginning, middle and end of the sense-object, and it is an activity, being a perfect judgment (*krisis*) and standing still at once as a whole in the instant at the form (*eidos*) of the sensible object. This form is not imposed like a seal on wax (which is not proper to life), nor does it proceed into depth (still less does it stand still with a cognitive activity), but it is projected (*proballomenon*) from within by the concept of sensible objects which is preconceived (*proeilêmmenos logos*) in the soul. (This is not the soul that gives life to the organ as an organ, but that which uses it when already alive, so that by transcending the body it may act indivisibly and have knowledge of sensible objects.) The concept is one, but not according to the contracted unity in individual things, but as fitting each of them in an appropriate way according to the formal unity which encompasses all individuals causally. For the soul perceives (*aisthanesthai*) all particular white things according to that one concept; for that which judges (*krinein*) is the soul through the appropriate contact of that which is known, and it is appropriate because the soul has in its substance a preconception (*prolêpsis*) of the same property [that is perceived]. Therefore, the soul becomes like its sensible objects not by receiving something from them but through being active in accordance with the concept appropriate to them. Now that this has been determined generally of all sense-perception we must go on to what follows. CS

(11) 'Simplicius' *in DA* 128,22-9

For sight is not related to size *qua* sight, but to colour: in act when standing still at its form in seeing, and before that characterised by potentiality, neither being perfected from itself alone and from within, nor only externally by the sensible object, but by the sense organ being affected by that in a way similar to what affects it; but the sense organ is affected in a vital manner and its being affected terminates in formal activity as the sensitive soul recognises (*gnôrizein*) the sensible object by projection of concepts (*probolê logôn*) and stands still at its form. CS

(12) 'Simplicius' *in DA* 166,3-29

But, while every actual cognition (*gnôsis*) is defined by the form of its object, not being affected by it but being active, and active not creatively but with judgement (*kritikôs*) and understanding (*sunetikôs*), the other cognitive activities obtain their perfection from their own being and project (*proballesthai*) the form (*eidos*) of their object of themselves, but that of perception requires also the object perceived which lies outside in order to project actively the form of that object. That is why it is said to be both subject to affection and receptive of forms which, as it were, enter from elsewhere, and to be perfected by other things. An indication of this is the

fact that, being the lowest form [of cognition], sense perception must use an organ, and in such a way that it neither is itself strong enough to be self-sufficient in its use nor has an organ sufficient for the life that uses it, but one that needs first to be affected in some way by the perceptible object, the vital activity being simultaneously aroused by the external effect (*peisis*). So the organ, being a body, has in the life of perception an activity that is affective, but the sense that uses it is active without being affected, projecting from within the concepts (*logous proballein*) of the objects perceived in correspondence (*summetrôs*) with the affective activity of the organ, by (*kata*) which concepts, as has been said, it understands and judges actively (*suniêsi kai kritikôs energei*). [166,17] It is consequently said to be receptive of forms and to be affected by what has colour or flavour or sound because its organ needs to be affected by these, having received an appearance of the forms in them. For as the activity in the agent is akin to the form that is produced, so the effect according to the forms makes clear the kinship with the agent; and, by the appearance of the form which enters the sense organ by the agency of the perceptible object not only does the life in [the sense organ] become active, but also the life that uses it projects its activity of judgement (*kritikê*) pure according to the concepts which are akin to the affective activity in the sense organ; [and its activity is pure], since it is not affected nor does it receive the forms from outside. For the cognition (*gnôsis*) is from within, and so also the state corresponding to the object of knowledge. But the sense is said to be affected and to become the form because the sense organ receives the formal appearances from outside, and not without activity; for it receives the forms without matter; since every perceptible object is not a form but enformed. CS

(13) Priscian *Metaphrasis in Theophrastum* 2,26-3,9

But not even this [the form, *eidos*] is sufficient for sense perception. For the form which has been perfected round the sense organ in actuality is not cognitive (*gnôstikon*), in that it is divided up around bodies, and does not revert to one indivisible thing. But there is some concept (*logos*) of the objects of sense preconceived (*proeilêmmenos*) in the soul, which [concept] lives even of itself and is not only of the compound [of body and soul]; hence it is both active undividedly and exists as a potency of individuals (but not in the way that some one particular form comes to be in them), and is a concept cognitive (*gnôristikos*) of the objects of sense, subsisting in the soul but not settled in the body, one thing indeed but not like individual things, but having the one comprehending the many, and fitting [it] to each of them; for with the one concept of white the soul perceives (*aisthanesthai*) all the particular whites. It is necessary therefore for a concept of this kind to have been projected (*proballesthai*) if there is going to be perception; and it is projected as to something akin, [namely] the [appropriate] vital form, being aroused and fitted to this likeness of the external form, and being active together with it; for that which judges (*krinein*) is the concept, and

the synthesis connected with the sensitive soul, and the gathering together into the indivisible in the hypostasis separate from bodies. So, then, the soul has the form of the perceived object by the projecting of its concept, but not as receiving from it [the object] some shape or impression as from a seal. PH

(14) Boethius *Consolation* 5, metr. 4, lines 30-40 Bieler *CCL* 94

What comes first, indeed, is an experience in a living body which awakes and sets in motion the powers of the mind, when light strikes the eyes or a voice sounds in the ears. Then the strength of the mind is aroused, and summoning the forms (*species*) it holds within it to similar movements, it applies (*applicare*) them to the marks from outside, and mingles the images with the forms stored within itself. RWS

(15) Boethius *Consolation* 5, prose 1, lines 1-10 Bieler *CCL* 94

In the case of the perception of bodies, their properties, situated outside us, are presented to our sense organs, and the effect upon the body precedes the activity of the mind, calling the mind to activity within itself and arousing the forms (*excitare formas*) within that have previously been quiet. But if in the case of the perception of bodies the mind is not marked by some effect upon it, but by its own power passes judgement (*iudicare*) on the effect added to the body, how much more do those things which are free from all bodily feelings not follow in their act of discernment what is situated outside them, but rather carry out the activity of their own mind? RWS

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1(c) Reception of form without matter

Aristotle believes that in perception form is received without matter. Since the form is normally (with three loosely worded exceptions) said to be received, not perceived, no problem arises about an inner object of perception interposing itself between us and the external object of perception. But as to what the reception of form is, there are various interpretations (surveyed, Victor Caston, 'The spirit and the letter: Aristotle on perception', in Ricardo Salles, ed., *Metaphysics, Soul and Ethics: Themes in the Work of Richard Sorabji*, Oxford forthcoming). Does the eye-jelly receive colour patches, or coded information, or do we merely become cognitive? Philoponus and 'Simplicius' adopt the last interpretation: form is received cognitively, *gnôstikôs*. As for 'without matter', this too has received different interpretations: 'without receiving particles of matter (such as some of Aristotle's predecessors had postulated)', or 'without the perceiver's matter undergoing any ordinary alteration'. Philoponus finds the second in Aristotle, whether or not in the phrase 'without matter'.

(1) Philoponus *in DA* 309,15-29

For what perceives is assimilated to the perceptible not by being affected in any way, nor by changing from possessing an opposite condition, but by receiving the form (*eidos*) of the perceptible without coming to be like matter to that form. For sense does not become white on receiving the form of the perceptible, which is why it is not said to be affected or qualitatively changed in the proper sense, but rather receives cognitively (*gnôstikôs*) in itself the rational principle of the form (*logos tou eidous*). We say the wax is potentially what the seal is, because it becomes in actuality what the seal is when affected by it without receiving its matter, but only its form. So also sense when affected by perceptibles gets marked by their forms in an incorporeal way (*asômatôs*). But there is a difference because the wax itself comes to be matter for the form in the seal, whereas sense does not come to be matter for the perceptible, but gets marked cognitively by its form. And sense has yet another difference from the wax. For even though wax comes to be matter for the form in the ring, it does not receive the form throughout itself, but only on the surface. The perceptive capacity, however, is marked by the forms of the perceptibles throughout itself in a living way (*zôtikôs*). RRKS

(2) Philoponus *in DA* 438,6-15

Sense is not affected by the combination of matter and form, but only by the form (*eidos*), as wax is affected by the seal. Nor is it affected *as* a combination, for the organ does not become coloured or odorous, but is affected only in respect of its form, I mean the perceptive capacity itself. The body does suffer the effect of heat, and the sense of touch suffers, but not the same effect. The sense is affected cognitively (*gnôstikôs*), and only by the form of the hot thing, whereas the organ, the flesh, as matter, is affected as a combination, becoming a subject for the heat to inhere in, and being affected as a whole by the heating agent as a whole. RRKS

(3) 'Simplicius' *in DA* 125,21-3

But later, in being active (*energein*), what perceives stands still at the form of the sensible object, not as being affected – for it does not become white or hot – but in activity, not acting (*poiein*), as efficient causes do. Rather, [it stands] in judgement and cognition (*kritikôs kai gnôstikôs*). CS

(4) 'Simplicius' *in DA* 167,1-11

For the composite thing also is active according to its form, and the sense receives the formal activity, not by being determined, e.g. being whitened or sounding or being sweetened or being heated, nor being so affected, but as being cognitively (*gnôstikôs*) active with regard to the white object or the sound or any of the others, and it is said to be affected because it is itself aroused, when the sense organ receives the activity from outside. For even if the body grows hot, the reception of the form does not consist in becoming hot but in cognitive activity according to the form of heat, since, as being heated, the organ becomes something sensible, but not sensitive. So that even if the sense of sight is segregated by a white object, it is not by being so affected that it makes its judgement, but by its activity according to the form of whiteness. CS

(5) 'Simplicius' *in DA* 190,7-8

Now we must say something about how 'the sense organ becomes receptive of the sense object without its matter'. It receives not the white thing but the activity of the white. HJB

A process of qualitative change in the sense organs is ruled out by a number of other commentators, by Alexander to prevent a collision of colours in the eye-jelly (cf. also *DA* 62,1-13 in **1(d)**), and by Themistius, except for the case of touch, whose organ takes on hot, cold, hard and soft. The organ of touch for Aristotle is in the heart, and the flesh serves as the medium (see Themistius *in DA* 76,32-77,22 in **1(d)**) through which the qualities affect it.

(6) Alexander *DA* 61,30-62,5

If sight were to be stirred in such a way as to be affected and to receive white and black, it would receive opposites at the same time, which is impossible. But if it is in a different way that sense perception is changed by perceptibles, and the organs (*aisthêtêria*) do not serve as matter receiving the qualities of the perceptibles, it would no longer be such an impasse. For it is evident that sight does not serve as matter receiving the qualities, for we see that sight does not become black or white when it perceives these. RRKS

(7) Themistius *in DA* 75,10-19

The existence of some medium must be posited for [touch] too, and the difference between touch and taste in relation to the other [senses] must not be in respect of this, but rather of the fact that in the case of the other [senses] the medium itself is not qualitatively changed, but the sense organ [is qualitatively changed] through the medium. (It has already been explained [*DA* 2.5] how 'being qualitatively changed' is to be understood.) In the case [of touch and taste], on the other hand, the sense organ and the medium are affected simultaneously; for the actual flesh is chilled and heated. The same thing, then, simultaneously [strikes] flesh and the organ of touch as in the case of someone who by striking a shield simultaneously strikes the hoplite [carrying it]. But [in the case of sight] the transparent [medium] is not qualitatively changed by becoming white or black itself, nor [in the case of hearing] is the air lodged in the ears [qualitatively changed] by itself becoming high-pitched or low-pitched as a result of the sound. RBT

(8) Themistius *in DA* 79,29-37

That is why flesh could also never be a sense organ since, just like inanimate objects, it is in a way involved with the tangible pairs of opposites. For [flesh] is heated and chilled, and becomes like matter for the tangible pairs of opposites. But we do not see this in the case of the other sense organs: thus the eyeball does not turn white, nor does the air lodged in the ears acquire a lower or higher pitch. So flesh too is not a sense organ since it cannot receive the imprint of the mere form and ratio [of the object of perception], but instead becomes matter for what is active, whereas something that engages in discerning [objects] must be unaffected by the object that is discerned. RBT

Ordinary qualitative change is ruled out also by Plotinus because the organ must mediate between the sensible and the sensitive.

(9) Plotinus 4.4 [28] 23 (18-33)

So there must not only be these two things, the external object and the soul, or else the soul would not be affected. Rather, what is going to be affected must be a third thing, that is, what is going to receive the form (*morphê*). So it must be affected together with and in the same sort of way as [the external object] and be of one matter with it, and it must be affected, while the other [the soul] has cognition. And it must be affected in such a way as to preserve something of what has acted on it, without being identically affected. But since it is between what has acted and the soul, it must undergo an effect that lies between perceptible and intelligible as a proportional mean (*meson analogon*) somehow joining the extremes to each other,

receiving and announcing at the same time, and fitted to become like each of the two extremes. RRKS

For being an organ of knowledge it must not be the same as either the knower or what he is to know, but it must be able to be assimilated to each – to the external object by being affected, to the inner part of the soul because the effect on it becomes a form (*eidos*). So if what we are saying is sound, sense perceptions must take place through bodily organs. BF

If there is no coloration of the eye-jelly, the Neoplatonists will be able to represent perception as that much more akin to thought; Aristotle had described both as involving reception of form without matter.

Reading
Aristotle:
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1(d) Dematerialisation of the sensory process

The commentators were struck by the fact that the intersecting gazes of two viewers do not interfere with each other, whereas sounds or odours are interfered with both by each other and by wind conditions. The process in the surrounding medium, as well as that in the sense organ, is de-materialised, but to different degrees for different senses, least of all for the sense of touch, more (in this order) for smell, hearing and sight. Philoponus *in DA* 392,9-11 feels he must make a concession (further studied in **Logic and Metaphysics 3(t)**) about smelling. The process is not so corporeal that the smelly particles reach all the way to our nostrils.

(1) Alexander *DA* 62,1-13

But if it is in a different way that sense perception is changed by perceptibles, and the organs (*aisthêtêria*) do not serve as matter receiving the qualities of the perceptibles, it would no longer be such an impasse. For it is evident that sight does not serve as matter receiving the qualities, for we see that sight does not become black or white when it perceives these. But neither does the illuminated air, in spite of serving sight for the

grasping of colours, do this through itself being first changed by the colours and itself becoming black or white (*oude dia tou melas autos ê leukos ginesthai*). At least nothing prevents one person apprehending black and another white through the same air, when the white and black lie directly in front of the observers, but each looks at the colour lying not by himself but by the other person. Even if a black and a white person were to see each other, the intervening air is still not prevented from serving both of them simultaneously, because it is not changed by the colours qualitatively (*pathêtikôs*), and does not come to act as the matter (*mêde hôs hulê ginomenos*) of the colours. RRKS

(2) Themistius *in DA* 75,10-19, translated above in **1(c)**

(3) Themistius *in DA* 76,32-77,22

Touch is, however, the most corporeal of the senses, since its objects are the most corporeal, and are varieties of body *qua* body (not *qua* body with a soul). For what produces forms in the elements, which are primary, are heat and coldness, and dryness and fluidity, all discussed in detail in *On Coming to be and Perishing*. The sense organ for objects of touch (the [organ] in which the sense called 'touch' exists primarily) should be called 'capable of touching', just like 'capable of hearing', 'capable of seeing' and 'capable of smelling', but it should be realised that the part in which this capacity of the soul exists primarily has potentially the character that objects of touch actually have. So it is potentially hot and potentially cold, etc., and that is why I said that it was itself also the most corporeal [capacity]. It has, in fact, been stated in general terms that perceiving is [by definition] being affected in a certain way, and that what is affected is also in one way the same as the object that produces the affection, in another is not the same; for it is not the same while it is being affected, but is the same after it has been affected. This is why the organ of touch does not perceive what is equally hot, cold, hard or soft [as itself] (and indeed not just the internal [organ], but not even the medium, i.e. the flesh), but [the organ perceives] the excesses and deficiencies, since the sense organ is like a mean between the extremes [found] in the objects of perception. But it is not a mean in the way that we speak of the moral excellences as means in relation to vices, for they are, and are spoken of, as means by [reference to] their equidistance from the vices. Here, by contrast, [we speak of a mean] because the mean is potentially either extreme. And touch is not like the other senses, because it is also not a mean in an identical way, for in their case what the capacity for sight [for example] primarily exists in is totally colourless, and what the capacity for hearing primarily exists in is entirely without sound. But [what touch primarily exists in] cannot fail to share in every quality that can be an object of touch. That is because anything that can touch is a body, and it has been stated that the qualities that can be touched are qualities of body *qua* body. Touch and the

remaining [senses] are, therefore, means in quite different ways: the [other senses are so] by possessing none of the [qualities] that they accept, whereas touch [is a mean] because it already possesses the intermediate [state] between the [opposites] hot and cold, <fluid and dry>, and hard and soft. [In the case of touch], that is, the medium [itself] can discern the extremes because it becomes one of the actual extremes relative to the other, and is affected by each of the extremes not through being like it, but through being [in itself] unlike it. RBT

(4) Themistius *in DA* 79, 29-37, translated above in **1(c)**

(5) Philoponus *in DA* 432,32-433,11

And yet the distinctive character of touch is not destroyed, for the medium itself is acted on and becomes matter for the heat, cold, fluidity, or dryness, and so also does the organ in company with it, which was not the case with the other senses, for they received only the activities (*energeiai*) of the perceptibles. But we must recognise that not even the organ of touch is acted upon by every sensation, for when it grasps heavy and light, viscous and crumbly, rough and smooth, the flesh does not become like that, but receives the forms of those qualities only cognitively (*gnôstikôs*). But since, as has often been said, every body is constituted from the mixture of fluid, dry, hot, and cold, because of this, when it is affected by these qualities, as sense it grasps them and recognises (*ginôskei*) them, but as a natural body it is affected materially (*hulikôs*) by them. It can be concluded that these are the only two contrary pairs from which a natural body is constituted. For only these act on the organ which they affect and come in their essence (*ousiôdôs*) to be in them, whereas weight and lightness, despite accompanying every body (for every body that has come to be is heavy or light), do not for all that convert the flesh into their own distinctive likeness (*idiotês*), as do heat, fluidity, cold, and dryness. RRKS

(6) Philoponus *in DA* 413,4-12

Thus at least it was shown in the *Meteorology* that although the thunder occurs first, we apprehend it after, and although the lightning occurs later, we apprehend it first, both because hearing is more gross (*pakhumeresteron*) and because the motion of light is quick (*kinêsis oxeia*). So too with rowing, we see the oar-handle lifted first and then perceive the sound. Similarly smell, being more corporeal (*sômatoeidestera*) than hearing, needs more time to grasp its object, even if it is quite close. It needs time for the affected (*pathôn*) air to get through to the nostrils (*muktêres*) in order that the quality (*pathos*) may more quickly get through to the sense-organ (*aisthêtêrion*). RRKS

(7) Philoponus *in DA* 416,30-4

Again with the other senses the air itself has to be affected materially, in order that so the sense may be affected. For example, it must become fragrant or sonorous, but with sight it is not so, for the air is not coloured. And take the fact that sight does not operate without light, but the other senses do. There is no need then for the same things to happen with all the senses. RRKS

(8) Philoponus *in DA* 391,11-29

The following problem might be raised. If smell apprehends through a medium, air or water, why does one odour overpower another? Often a fragrant odour supervenes on a bad one and overpowers it or vice versa, which ought not to happen if the air transmitted odours, and it was not the smellable vapours themselves that came to the organ, just as the air transmits all colours, and never does the activity of, say, white or of any other colour, black for example, overpower another. That is because it is not the colours themselves that are produced in the air, but their activities (*energeiai*). That is what ought to happen with odours too, if the air transmitted only their activities and not actual vapours which are physical bodies. Again the same problem is intensified by the following, I mean the problem that sense does not apprehend the object of smell through a medium, but the object of smell itself comes to the organ: we apprehend incense precisely when it is placed on a fire and dissolved into vapour. The smoke is seen quite evidently rising and coming towards us. And indeed when we want to apprehend the odour more quickly, we waft the smoke to our nose with our hands. So evidently some bodily effluence arises from the fragrant bodies themselves, and the air does not transmit their activities, as with colours and sounds. RRKS

(9) Philoponus *in DA* 392,3-19

We reply that there do indeed occur fine effluences of bodies from fragrant things and especially from burning incense. And for that reason, when they are produced in the air, the greater and that which has the more vigorous odour overcomes the lesser. For even with sounds, where there is no effluence of bodies, the louder sound overpowers the softer, and the very brilliant overpowers the less brilliant. But even if some effluence does occur, it does not itself occur in the organ and bring about apprehension. Rather, a medium, either water or air, is needed, which transmits the activities of the objects of smell. For how do water animals smell what is above the surface of the water? It is not plausible that this effluence goes downwards through the water. It will rather go upwards, if it is vaporous or smoky as Aristotle says next. But as it is, crocodiles smell flesh suspended above the surface of the water. And it is clear from the case of those

which hunt by night that they pursue it not by sight, but by smell. Vultures too perceive dead bodies from tens of thousands of distances away, and surely effluences do not travel from the bodies as far as that. RRKS

Waves: One instance of the dematerialisation of the sensory process is the development of the concept of a wave moving through matter, as opposed to moving matter. When a wave moves through water or air, successive regions of water or air need only joggle up and down, although the pseudo-Aristotelian *Problems* seems to envisage them moving along a little way. The *Problems* compares Aristotle's account of projectile motion to introduce the idea of a wave. But Aristotle's own account of sound (*Sens.* 446b9, translated in **Physics 19(c)**, and *DA* 2.8, 419b25-7) speaks of the air moving. Aristotle does however speak of a movement being transmitted through air or water in his treatment of dream prophecy.

(10) Aristotle *DA* 2.8, 419b25-7

An echo occurs when air bounces back like a ball from the air which has become unified because of the vessel which bounds it and stops it being dissipated. ARL

(11) Aristotle *On Divination through Sleep* 464a6-11

For as, when something moves water or air, this moves something else, and when that [mover] ceases it happens that a similar motion is extended up to a certain point in the absence of the [original] mover, so nothing stops a certain motion and perception reaching souls which are dreaming .... ARL

(12) Alexander *DA* 48,7-21, cf. 50,15-16

We can also say it is not that the first air to be struck travels to the concave body and to the air trapped in it and returns back again from these to the same spot. If that happened, there would be a double circular movement, as the air beyond the struck air, which was itself [reading *auton*] in motion to the concave region, yielded and returned again. Rather, the first air to be struck will remain continuous and undivided because of the speed of the blow and will shape the air beyond it with a similar blow, and this air will shape the air beyond it, and so the advance of the sound will be effected by continuous transmission up to the containing cavity. But when the last air beside the cavity is struck and shaped, it will be prevented by the cavity from transmitting the blow further forward, and will be pushed back again by the resistance of the solid, like a ball off something solid. Thus it will strike and shape once again the air on its nearer side, and this air will again shape the air before it. RRKS

(13) 'Aristotle' *Problems* 11.6, 899a32-b17 Ruelle, Teubner

Or [is it that] not only do those imitating [people at a distance] imitate

through this means, but the sounds themselves come higher in pitch? The reason is that the air being borne along makes the sound, and as the initial [thing], that which set the air in motion, sounds, so must the air in turn make [a sound], some of it causing movement and some of it being moved. Therefore the sound is continuous, because [air] which moves [something] takes over from [other air] which moves [something], until it is exhausted, which in the case of bodies is [the cause of] falling, when the air can no longer impel the missile, in the one case, or the air, in the other. For continuous vocal sound occurs when air is impelled by air, and the missile is borne along when a body is moved by air. However, in this case the same body is ever borne along (*pheresthai*), until it falls, while in the other case [i.e. that of sound, it is] ever different air [that is borne along]. And at first small things move faster but over a short distance, so that voices at a distance are higher in pitch and lighter, for the faster is high in pitch, as has already been discussed, just as the same cause holds for why children and the sick speak at a high pitch, and male adults and the healthy at a low one. The reason why it is not obvious to those nearby that the voice is lower or higher in pitch, and why in general the situation is not the same as when heavy things are thrown, is that the heavy object is borne along as always one and the same, whereas sound is air impelled by air. And that is also why the [heavy thing] falls onto one [place], while the voice [travels] everywhere, as though the thrown object, while it was being borne along, was infinitely fragmented [in all directions], even including backwards. ARL

Reading

John Ellis, 'The trouble with fragrance', *Phronesis* 35, 1991, 290-302.

Richard Sorabji, 'From Aristotle to Brentano: the development of the concept of intentionality', *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* supp. vol. 1991, 227-59.

C. Ferrari-La Roche, 'L'odore della mela. Ibn aṭ-Ṭayyib e la tradizione araba delle Categorie', in Cristina d'Ancona, ed., *Aristotele e i suoi esegeti neoplatonici.*

1(e) Intentional objects

The dematerialisation of the sensory process encouraged the idea found in Avicenna and Averroes of an intentional object of perception (Arabic *ma'na*, translated into medieval Latin as *intentio*). Philoponus (*in DA* 309,15-29; 438,32-433,11; 438,6-15) and 'Simplicius' (*in DA* 125.21-3; 167,1-11), as was seen above in **1(c)**, take the view that the reception of form in Aristotle's theory of perception is a merely cognitive (*gnôstikôs*) reception, and already Alexander denies, *DA* 62,1-5 (cf. *Quaestio* 3.9), that it involves the eye jelly taking on colours. His reason is a physical one, the need to avoid collisions of colour. Many other physical considerations were raised in comparing the different degrees of corporeality of different senses, as described under **1(d)**. These physical considerations were exploited by Averroes, Albert the Great, Thomas Aquinas and others in ascribing an intentional object to perception. Relevant passages are translated from Latin in Sorabji's article in *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, supp. vol. 1991. In **Logic and Metaphysics 15** the forms of perceptibles will be contrasted with objects of

intellectual thought (*nous*). The Neoplatonists treat the latter as real, not intentional. As Victor Caston has shown, Latin writers, notably Augustine, describing mental acts in general in *On the Trinity*, especially Book 11 (a work later translated into Byzantine Greek), and Calcidius, describing the perceptual theories of Heraclitus and the Stoics (*in Tim.* 237 Waszink), use the term *intentio*. But it has a different meaning, viz. attention (or probing), not intentional object.

Reading

Victor Caston, 'Connecting traditions: Augustine and the Greeks on intentionality', in Dominik Perler, ed., *Aristotle and Medieval Theories of Intentionality*, Leiden 2001, 23-48.

Richard Sorabji, 'From Aristotle to Brentano: the development of the concept of intentionality', *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* supp. vol. 1991, 227-59.

1(f) Objections to vision involving bodies travelling to or from the eye

In many ways a physics of travelling bodies for vision would be impossible, as urged by Alexander, Galen, Plotinus and Philoponus. Parallel objections were raised by some commentators (not all) to *light* being a body or travelling, as illustrated in **Physics 19**. But these objections, even though parallel, were canvassed separately, since light was not normally given the function of conveying information to sight. (For a partial exception in the case of light from the stars, see the report in Philoponus *in DA* 325,33-5, below in this section **(6)**.)

(1) Alexander *in Sens.* 30,6-21

Furthermore if many people were to be seeing the same thing at the same time from different places and the cones were to be travelling, or whatever it is which travels from the eye to the [body] being seen from all those who are seeing, the things that are travelling and surrounding (*perilambanein*) the [body] being seen would necessarily travel through each other. In this way the cones would be divided by each other. If this comes about, the continuity of the bodies which are sent out to the [body] being seen is necessarily broken up, and if this [continuity] were divided it would no longer be possible to see. This same thing would necessarily come about also if the people seeing were two people standing opposite each other, and there were something visible placed in a straight line with each of the people seeing and they were not seeing the things in a straight line with themselves but each of them [were seeing] the thing that had been placed in a straight line with the other person. For in this case necessarily the cones would collide with each other in the middle and be divided by each other, or one would pass through the other. In this case two bodies would again come to be in the same [place]. Furthermore how will those who see each other when they are opposite to each other be able to see? For either the cones will not proceed when they meet each other, if they are of equal strength, with the result that neither will see the other, or one will see the other but the other will not see him. RRKS

(2) Alexander *in Sens.* 28,23-8

Again, if the efflux [from what is perceived] is so fine as to be able to stretch such a great distance without obviously depleting any of the body from which it flows, why is it not easily destroyed by whatever it encounters? For the finest bodies are easily affected, whereas this efflux can evidently not be diverted from its rectilinear direction by the most violent winds. RRKS

(3) Alexander *in Sens.* 57,10-27

And how, being fine, will they not be scattered when there are winds? For we see even if there is an intervening wind. Moreover how does apprehension of distance come about if the eye sees the [bodies] which fall on [it]? How will we not see with our eyes shut if the [bodies] which travel are fine? For they will be able to pass inside through the passages when the eyes are shut. And why will we not see when the [body] being seen is superimposed on the eyes? For even then [on that view] the images (*eidôla*) will flow from [the body being seen] and the eye will admit them. Or why does there come to be a necessity for light for seeing if the eye admits the [body] being seen? Moreover either the [bodies] flowing from [the body being seen] are juxtaposed with the eye, at the time when it turns (*epistrephesthai*) to them, or they are travelling. If they are juxtaposed, there will be no apprehension of distance at all. But if they are travelling at that time, firstly it will take more time for us to see bodies that are more distant [from us], something which we do not see coming about. Moreover, if according to them the distance will be seen because of the quantity of the air which flows from [the body seen] and falls on the sight before the image (*eidôlon*) which itself falls on the sight too, firstly how will the sight admit so large a quantity of air? (For in regard to each movement of an image [the sight] will admit as much air as intervenes between it and the body seen). Secondly, will the images which flow from [the body seen] possess a certain strength so as to be able to push this [air] forward? Then again how will this [body of air] be preserved when there is a wind? For the wind is seen sweeping away the intervening air. AT

(4) Galen *PHP* 7.5.2-4

Which of these alternatives is the more correct may best be judged in the following way. We see through the perforation at the pupil; if this perforation waited for some portion or power or image or quality of the external bodies underlying (our perception) to come to it, we would not discern the size of the object seen, which might be, for example, a very large mountain. An image the size of the mountain would have come from the mountain and entered our eyes, which is utterly absurd. It is also absurd that at one moment of time the image should reach every viewer, even though they are

countless. And the optic *pneuma* cannot extend itself and acquire such a stream as to envelop the whole object being viewed; for this is comparable to the Stoic drop that mixes with the whole sea. PDL

(5) Plotinus 4.6 [41] 1 (26-9)

How could the soul say just how big the external size of something is, or even simply that it is big, for example the heavens? For an imprint of this size could not be in the soul. BF

(6) Philoponus *in DA* 325,6-326,26

If seeing came about through the emission of certain bodies, how could it be possible to apprehend the heaven at once (*athroon*) on looking up? For how could a body cross so great a distance in no time (*akhronôs*)? It has been demonstrated that there is a distance of two zodiacs from earth to the heaven. (The distance from the centre is equal to the side of a hexagon of two zodiacs and the perimeter is 7/3 of the diameter and the radial distance is half the diameter. Thus obviously, the diameter of the whole is four zodiacs and more and the perimeter is twelve zodiacs and half of the diameter would be more than two zodiacs.) How then could a body cross so great a distance in no time? For even the fastest motion, that of the sphere of fixed stars, takes two hours to move a sixth of the whole, which is two zodiacs. How then could it not be irrational (*alogon*) to suppose that bodies emitted from the eyes move faster even than the sphere of fixed stars?

[325,19] Again, if we see through bodily rays, given that we see a quarter of the heaven on looking up, it would have to be the case that sight (*opseis*) passing through the air or the heaven itself travelled body through body, an impossibility, or alternatively cut through it, in which case we should not see the heaven in continuity, nor the other visibles, if they do not pass whole through whole (*di' holou*) through the air but cut it. Obviously, the parts of visibles behind the parts of air not cut through would not be seen and so we would see in continuity none of the things seen but discretely and fragmentarily. HL-T

[325,27] Then, given that we see one quarter of the heaven on looking up, if seeing was accomplished by a certain emission of bodily rays, the supposition would be unavoidable that sight was a body of such a size as to come from us as far as the heaven and cover a quarter of it. It is irrational to say that from such a small part as the eye, or rather not even the whole eye, but the *korê* [channel of the optic nerve, see 366,11-13, translated in **1(h)**], bodies could be emitted of a size to cover a quarter of the universe.

[325,33] But against this they say that the things seen somehow come to meet sight, since light is emitted from the celestial bodies which meets sight in advance and so lets itself be apprehended.

[325,35] But against this we say: if sight does not strike the celestial bodies themselves but only the light that comes from them, how do astrono-

mers know the size of the stars? How do they know their movements? How their distances? And their convergences and separations (*sunodoi, apostasies*, [cf. Philoponus *Opif.* 232, 16-17; Simplicius *in Cael.* 480, 8-10] and all the other things which they demonstrate about the heavenly bodies? The demonstrations are made on the assumption that the spheres themselves are apprehended.

[326,2] Then this light coming from them has to be either corporeal or incorporeal. If it were corporeal, they will be refuted by the same arguments by which we will in turn refute those who say that light is a body. But if it is incorporeal, what need is there of the emission of sight and of sight being met in advance? For if these activities are wholly incorporeal, they will reach sight even without being met in advance, and thus they will be saying the same as Aristotle about sight and light, as we shall recognise a little later.

[326,9] In general, if seeing is brought about by emission from sight, what is emitted must be either corporeal or, as the mathematicians are thought to say, lines. But if sight going out were lines, it would clearly contact the things seen at points. Now they say that seeing is accomplished by sight contacting the things seen – it contacts them at points, so it will apprehend the things seen at points, and will then not apprehend magnitudes, which is absurd.

[326,15] But if [sight going out] were corporeal, either the part of the curved membrane (*keratoeides*) over the *korê* must be perforated, which is false, since it is continuous, and when it is perforated, the fluids immediately flow out, or body must pass through body, which is itself also impossible, or sight must go out through certain pores. But it has been demonstrated in [Aristotle's] *On Coming-to-be* [*and Perishing* 1.8] that bodies do not have pores. Besides, there would absolutely have to be solids and bodies in the membranes by which the pores are separated, so sight could not go through those. Hence one could not see the ground or anything else as continuous, but would see some parts and not others. For one could not see those parts of what was seen with which the solids separating the pores were aligned, and nothing would be seen as continuous, which is contrary to evident facts. RRKS

(7) Philoponus *in DA* 400,18-21

For if seeing was by way of efflux from colours, the efflux would be a body, and, being a body, it would be plausible that it should endure even when the source of the efflux had been removed for a while. Again, if there were an efflux, why is it not scattered by the winds? RRKS

1(g) Philoponus' view, the activity (*energeia*) of colour

What the medium conveys in vision is not a body, but the activity of colour, according to Philoponus, who ascribes the view to Aristotle. This activity affects us only when the objects seen are in a straight line in front of our eyes.

1(g) Philoponus' view, the activity (energeia) of colour

(1) Philoponus *in DA* 331,13-16

The activities (*energeiai*) are always in the air without affecting it (*apathôs*) and do not act on us, except when the objects of perception are in the direct line of sight, just as according to [those who postulate sight going out in the opposite direction] sight does not strike the thing seen unless it is directly aligned with it. RRKS

Problem (i): If the activity of colour travels (*phoitân*) to our eyes, how can we tell the distance of what we see? Reply: it does not travel, but the activities are weaker at a distance.

Problem (ii): The view is ascribed to Aristotle that, since the same thing can be seen from many vantage points, the activities of colours must be distributed throughout the air; why then do we not see in whatever direction we turn our gaze and from whatever distance? Reply: the stained glass phenomenon. A beam passing through stained glass colours not the whole of the air but only suitable surfaces of masonry that are facing it.

(2) Philoponus *in DA* 330,32-331,1

Why, if the activities of the visibles are in the air, do we not see even behind our backs? For if the air has the activities of colour in every part, as is revealed by the fact that observers from all directions see the same colour – for example, let A be a colour and around it let there be several observers B, C, D, E, F and G, then they will all observe the colour, so that clearly the activities of colour are in every part of the air – if, then, this is so, why indeed do we not also see what is behind our backs? HL-T

(3) Philoponus *in DA* 334,38-336,3

The philosopher [Aristotle] replied to this [sc. the objections to activities travelling] that the activities (*energeiai*) do not travel to our eyes, but that quite generally the whole air is filled with all the objects of vision. But that is even more problematic and strange. For first, the original problem remains: if all the air alike is filled with displays (*emphaseis*) of the objects of vision, how do we judge distances? For things near and very far ought to look alike. Even the most distant things ought not to escape our senses, if indeed the whole of the air is filled with all the displays. Perhaps he could reply that our hypothesis about activities is the same as theirs about the travel of sight: just as they say that sight weakens when it goes out a long way, and that this is why we do not see distant things, so we say that the activities weaken when they go a good distance. But what can he say to the next question? If all the air is filled with displays, what use is it to assume the idea that the activities move in straight lines? We ought rather to see things, including near things and indeed all that we are capable of seeing, wherever we look, once the air is filled with displays. So why do we not see the heavens and all visible things without gazing towards them? Yet we can

invoke evident facts in support of Aristotle's view [that seeing depends not on vision travelling out, but on activities].

[335,14] [Attempted solution]. For we see that, when a beam of sunlight falls through a glass that is coloured red or some such colour, the air remains unaffected (*apathes*) and lets through the colour and outline of the glass, until they make contact with a solid body, and the colour and outline of the glass finally mark (*enapomattesthai*) that solid. It really is remarkable to see: for if you gaze at the air through which the beam passes, you see it unaffected by the colour and outline of the glass, but colour and outline are seen on the solid body at which the beam finishes up. And you must not explain it by a reflection of vision as it reaches that point, for this sort of thing happens not only on smooth surfaces, but also on wool, if that is what the beam falls on, or on a cloak, or on sand, or on anything, even when your vision is arbitrarily situated, so that there could be no reflection from that surface to the glass. It is clear from this that the activities of what we see really do go through the air without affecting it (*apathôs*), arrive at the sense-organ, and, since this is a solid body, imprint (*entupoun*) there the colours and shapes of the things seen. Hence the organ is affected (*paskhein*) by them, and the discrimination of them passes through to the sense faculty.

[335,30] [Caveat]. But it can be replied that we do not find the same thing happening in the case of what we see as in the case of our model. For the phenomenon described does not happen unless a beam falls on something after passing through the glass, whereas we see things even when no beam falls on them directly from the sun. And besides in the case of the glass there is an appearance (*phantasia*) of colour in anything on which the beam falls, whereas nothing of this kind appears in the case of things that we see. For they evidently do not act on other bodies, even if a beam passes through them. So what happens in the case of the model is different from the activity of what we see, and in general from our apprehension of it. RRKS

The stained-glass effect is recorded also by Roger Bacon on the supposed site of whose study I am writing this note, and is called by him an *intentio*, *Opus Maius* 2, pp. 409-20 Bridges, translated in *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, supp. vol. 1991.

Reading

Sylvia Berryman, 'Rainbows, mirrors and light: can Aristotle's theory of vision be saved?', in M.G.F. Martin, M.W.F. Stone, eds, *The Problems of Perception, London Studies in the History of Philosophy* 5, London 2004.

Richard Sorabji, 'John Philoponus' in his (ed.) *Philoponus and the Rejection of Aristotelian Science*, London & Ithaca, NY 1987, 1-40, at 26-30.

Richard Sorabji, 'From Aristotle to Brentano: the development of the concept of intentionality', *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* supp. vol. 1991, 227-59.

1(h) Optic nerve

The nerves were identified after Aristotle in the third century BC by Herophilus. Only some commentators gave them a role in perception, despite Galen's work on them.

(1) Galen *PHP* 7.4.4-10

I showed in [my work] *On Demonstration* that something of that kind happens also in visual perception. For that there is a movement of luminous pneuma in the case of those nerves, which have perforations clearly visible both at their upper beginning and at the attachment to the eyes, may be seen in the dissection of large animals. Most anatomists are familiar with the lower orifice at the eyes, but the upper beginning of these nerves has escaped the notice, I would say, of all of them; it is at the point where the anterior ventricles turn to the side. Each of these [ventricles] has a lower end that is narrow and elongated, where the nasal passages have their root, and an upper end that widens out as it reaches the middle ventricle; and from that point there is a slanting curve which inclines somewhat toward the lower region and the base. The ventricles do not reach as far as the base, however, but narrow gradually and terminate like a horn that is not entirely straight but has a gentle curvature. The beginning of the optic nerves, which has a perforation that is difficult to see, extends to this end of the ventricles. You will see it when you have achieved these three conditions: first, that the animal be large; second, that it be dissected immediately after its death; and third, that the surrounding air be bright. If with these provisions you properly expose the end of the ventricle by removing all the bodies that lie over it, without tearing or crushing the outgrowth of the nerve, you will see the perforation at the beginning of the nerve. PDL

(2) Plotinus 4.3 [27] 23 (9-21)

The organs of touch are at the ends of the nerves, which also have the power of moving the living creature; it is there that the soul offers itself in that capacity. The nerves start in the brain and it is there that people locate the principles of perception, impulse and of the whole living creature, obviously assuming that where the principles of the organs are, there is to be found what is going to use them. It would be better to say that the principle of the actualisation of the potentiality is located there; for where the source of movement in the organ resides, there must be fixed the potentiality of the workman, as it were, which is appropriate to the organ, or rather not so much the potentiality (for the potentiality is everywhere in the body) – but the principle of the actuality is where the principle of the organ is. BF

(3) Philoponus *in DA* 336,33-5

Our view, then, is that the optic *pneuma* really departs from the brain through the optic nerve and so reaches the crystalline lens and has here its destination. HL-T

(4) Philoponus *in DA* 366,10-14

Just as the fluid of the *korê* is set in front so that we may apprehend the visibles through it (and by *korê* one would mean not the aperture in the choroid membrane, for the fluids are more internal than this, but the channel of the optic nerve, through which the optic *pneuma* is emitted), so also is the connate air of the acoustic organ set in front. HL-T

(5) Philoponus *in DA* 19,5-15

And all the senses irradiate the brain. For the power of perception is supplied from it to the sense-organs via the nerves, and when it has been injured, the senses become inactive, as doctors prove. For when what is called the protector has been placed on the *meninx*, the animal becomes unconscious and motionless (the *meninx* is the membrane protecting the brain); and when the dorsal part [sc. of the brain] has been injured, the upper part of the subject enjoys perception, while feeling disappears in the lower parts, because the power of perception is no longer supplied from the brain, as the organ, i.e. the nerve, has been injured. And if the nerve was bound, feeling also disappears in the lower part but remains in the upper part. HL-T

1(i) Proclus puts *nous* (intellect) into perception

(1) Proclus *Platonic Theology* Saffrey-Westerink 3.6, 23,25-24,2

We shall agree that not only the rational animals partake in intellect, but also all other animals that have a cognitive faculty, I mean appearance (*phantasia*), memory and perception. RRKS

1(j) Is there perception of universals?

For interpretations of Aristotle's uncharacteristic affirmative at *An Post.* 2.19, 100a17, see **5(b)**.

2. *Phantasia*

The word *phantasia* (from which came our fantasy and fancy) is connected with the verb *phainesthai*, to appear. I believe that in the earlier 'Hellenistic' period 'appearance' brings out the meaning more often than any other translation, and this includes the appearance *that* something is the case. It is because appearance can take the form of imagination, or of entertaining mental images, that *phantasia* can also refer to those activities, or to the capacity for them. But, this chapter will suggest, in the centuries after Christ, as Platonism and Neopythagoreanism progressed, *phantasia* took on more and more roles of the imagination.

2(a) Aristotle's distinction between *phantasia* (appearance) and *doxa* (belief, opinion) Stoicised by Alexander

Plato made *phantasia* into *doxa* with sense perception, *Sophist* 263E-264D; *Republic* 603A. Aristotle distinguished *doxa* as calling for conviction (*pistis*) and hence reason(s) (*logos*). The Stoics offered the different distinction that judgment (*krisis*) and *doxa* involve giving the assent (*sunkatathesis*) of reason to the appearance. Alexander Stoicises, giving this as his view.

(1) Aristotle *DA* 3.3, 428a18-24

It remains, then, to see if *phantasia* is opinion (*doxa*), for opinion is true or false. But conviction (*pistis*) accompanies opinion, for it is not possible for someone with an opinion on something not to have conviction about it. Among wild animals, however, none have conviction, but many have *phantasia*. Again, conviction accompanies all opinion, being persuaded accompanies conviction, and reason (*logos*) accompanies persuasion (*peithô*). Among wild animals, however, some have *phantasia*, but not reason. RRKS

(2) Alexander *DA* 67,15-23

For conviction (*pistis*) is always a consequence (*hepesthai*) of the latter [opinion], for a person who has an opinion (*doxa*) about something always assents (*sunkatatithesthai*) to its being so as well. For opinion about something is an assent by that person to its being so, and assent is accompanied by conviction (*pistis*), since opinion is rational assent accompanied by judgement (*krisis*). But not every case of being appeared to (*phantasia*) is accompanied by conviction. For there are many non-rational animals, at any rate, who have [the ability to] be appeared to, but not conviction; but if they do not have conviction, then they do not have assent accompanied by judgement either. Furthermore, every opinion involves

composition – for it is either affirmative or negative – while not every case of being appeared to is such. For this reason, what is true and [what is] false are not similar in both cases, just as they are not in perception and opinion either. VC

Plotinus reverted to the association of *phantasia* with *doxa*, but 'Philoponus' recorded Aristotle's denial of the identity, and 'Simplicius' endorsed this denial.

(3) Plotinus 3.6 [26] 4 (18-23)

It should then be obvious to anyone that the appearance (*phantasia*) is in the soul – both the first one that we call an opinion, and the one derived from it, which is no longer an opinion, but, based in the lower part, is a murky quasi-opinion and unevaluated appearance, like the activity inherent in so-called Nature, insomuch as it produces (as they say) each thing without appearance. BF

(4) 'Philoponus' *in DA 3*, 485,15-16

He says that *phantasia* is neither perception, nor opinion, nor something constituted of both. RRKS

(5) 'Simplicius' *in DA* 211,30-212,27

[Aristotle *DA* 428a24: 'So it is clear that imagination (*phantasia*) would be neither opinion accompanied by sense perception nor produced by sense perception, nor a combination (*sumplokê*) of opinion and sense perception'.] Plato in the *Sophist* [264A] and *Philebus* [39Bff.] posits that imagination consists in a mixture (*mixis*) of opinion and sense perception, and with these words Aristotle seems to be making an objection to this position. But in truth he shows how one must understand mixture by his refutation of the notions put forward. For it is not the case that imagination has its being in this kind of activity of both, with sense perception coming first and opinion following on (this notion he indicated with 'nor produced by sense perception'), nor with both happening simultaneously, nor with them coinciding (*suntrekhein*) but each one contributing its own activity in its simple form, not mixed (*amikton*) with the other (one must think he means this when he says 'neither opinion accompanied by sense-perception'), or with them coinciding and being combined with each other and no longer distinct. Rather there is one common activity resulting from the two, not by merger (*sunkrisis*) with some destructive change in each, as in the case of honeyed wine (for it is impossible to posit this in the case of immaterial entities), but with them remaining as they are and unmixed (*eilikrines*), but with all of each as it were penetrating the whole of the other. It is not, of course, just any kind of mixture of sense perception and opinion that is imagination.

[212,12] ['Imagination is not these] partly for this reason', he says, meaning the things that have been mentioned, all the things that are peculiar to each of sense perception and opinion and distinguish appearance from them. As, for example, that in dream images there is neither potential nor actual sense perception, and if sense perception is of things which are present, imagination happens when sense objects are not present, and if opinion is not within our control and happens with assent to something as true and through persuasion and reasoning, while imagination is within our control and without belief or reason, imagination would not consist in the activity of both of those, either coming together or one coming first and the other following, both for these reasons and because of the argument which he now uses.

[212,21] So what mixture of them does Plato mean? The one which consists in the middle components being simple and themselves, but which is called a 'combination' (*sunthesis*) and a 'mixture' from the extremes because the middle terms have something in common (*koinônia*) with both the extremes. This is how Aristotle says the colours between come from white and black, and the *Timaeus* [35A] says that the soul comes from the substance that is undivided and the one that is divided in bodies, solely because of the participation of the middle terms in the extremes by virtue of their simplicity. For appearance too is in the middle between sense perception and opinion. HJB

Reading

For the view of Plutarch of Athens and Proclus on the relation of *phantasia* to *doxa*:

H.J. Blumenthal, 'Neoplatonic interpretations of Aristotle on phantasia', *Review of Metaphysics* 31, 1977, 242-57.

Peter Lautner, 'The distinction between phantasia and doxa in Proclus' *in Timaeum*', *Classical Quarterly* 52, 2002, 257-69.

H.J. Blumenthal, 'Plutarch's exposition of the *De Anima* and the psychology of Proclus', in *De Jamblique à Proclus*, Fondation Hardt, Entretiens 21, Vandoeuvres-Geneva 1975, 123-47, repr. in his *Soul and Intellect*, London 1993, Study 2.

2(b) Higher *phantasia* of intelligibles

Aristotle assigns *phantasia* to the perceptual faculty, even (*On Memory* 1, 450a12-14) when it is used for remembering intelligibles. But Plotinus distinguishes two faculties of *phantasia*, one concerned with sensibles and one with intelligibles. It is suggested below, under **4(c)**, that this is how *phantasia* can be made responsible in the immediately preceding chapter, Plotinus 4.3 [27] 30, for our consciousness of both thoughts and perceptions. The Neoplatonist Plutarch of Athens also distinguished two kinds of *phantasia*, which are described as an upper and lower side of a single *phantasia*. Dillon draws attention to some of Plotinus' reasons for postulating a higher *phantasia*. One reason is that the disembodied rational soul that has not ascended as high as the intelligible world will need some memory of its earthly life. But another reason, Dillon suggests, is that the embodied soul, reasoning about the intelligible world, needs to make use of those imaginative analogies and thought experiments at which Plotinus is so adept. See further under

2(l) below. For the two kinds of *phantasia*, see also Plotinus 3.6 [26] 4 (18-23), translated in **2(a)**.

(1) Plotinus 4.3 [27] 31 (1-20)

But if memory belongs to the imaginative faculty (*phantastikon*), and if both parts of the soul have been said to possess memory, then there are two imaginative faculties. So when the two parts of the soul are separate, both must be allowed to have an imaginative faculty; but when the two parts are merged together in us, in what manner do the two exist, and in which of them is memory to be found? If it is in both, then the images will always be twofold, for it cannot be the case that the one faculty in one part of the soul deals with intelligibles, and the other in the other part with sensibles; for if so there would be two entirely distinct living creatures having nothing to do with each other. So if it is in both, what is the difference, and why are we not aware of it?

[9] The answer is that when the two parts of the soul are in harmony, the imaginative faculties are not separate, and that of the better part of the soul is in control; then the image becomes a single one, as if the inferior one were the shadow of the other, or as if a weaker light insinuated itself into a stronger. But where there is dissonance and discord, the lower part of the soul clearly takes control of itself but fails to realise that it is isolated and that the soul has a twofold nature. For the two parts are joined in a unity, and the higher part rides on top of the other, so that it sees everything; when it dismounts, it retains some of the images that belong to the lower part, but rejects others. It is just as when we change from the company of inferior friends to that of nobler ones; we remember little of our former companions and more of our new ones. BF

(2) 'Philoponus' *in DA 3*, 515,12-15

Plutarch [of Athens] thinks there are two kinds of *phantasia*. One, its boundary in the upward direction or its source, is the boundary of discursive reason, its other boundary is the summit of the senses. RRKS

Plotinus, as John Dillon has brought out, exhorts us to use our imagination to picture the intelligible world, and adds that we can pray God to come to us, to complete our understanding.

(3) Plotinus 5.8 [31] 9 (7-15)

Let there, then, be in the soul a shining imagination (*phantasia*) of a sphere, an imagination that has within it everything, whether moving or still, or some moving and some still. Keep this and grasp in yourself another, removing its volume. Remove too the places and the mental image (*phantasma*) in you of matter, and do not try to grasp a different one

smaller in volume. But call on God who made that of which you have the mental image, and pray him to come. And may he come. RRKS

Iamblichus, in contrast with Plotinus, feels no need to postulate a higher kind of *phantasia*, when he makes *phantasia* image intelligible as well as sensible forms.

(4) Iamblichus in Priscian *Metaphrasis in Theophrastum* 23,13-18

And we must also add the views of Iamblichus, that imagination (*phantasia*) has developed naturally beside all the faculties of the soul, and represents in itself and moulds all the likenesses (*homoiotêtes*) of the forms (*eidê*), and transmits representative displays (*emphaseis*) connected with the one set of faculties to the others, raising up the one set [of displays] from sense-perception to opinion (*doxa*), and presenting to opinion the second, from intellect, and receiving in itself the images (*phantasmata*) from the wholes. PH

Reading

H.J. Blumenthal, 'Plutarch's exposition of the *De Anima* and the psychology of Proclus', in *De Jamblique à Proclus*, Fondation Hardt, Entretiens 21, Vandoeuvres-Geneva 1975, 123-47, repr. in his *Soul and Intellect*, London 1993, Study 2.

John Dillon, 'Plotinus and the transcendental imagination', in J.P. Mackey, ed., *Religious Imagination*, Edinburgh 1986, ch. 2, 55-64.

Anne Sheppard, '*Phantasia* and inspiration in Neoplatonism', in M. Joyal, ed., *Studies in Plato and the Platonic Tradition for John Whittaker*, Aldershot 1997, 201-10.

2(c) Can *phantasia* apprehend things as true or false?

'Simplicius'. No, that requires awareness of one's own cognitions:

(1) 'Simplicius' *in DA* 206,11-20

The imaginative activity is undergone (*pathos*) through the activity's being divided and impressionable (*tupôtikon*) and inseparable from bodies; but it is up to us, because we do not make up imprints (*anaplattomen tous tupous*) entirely in conformity to objects, nor do we project (*proballein*) imaginations (*phantasiai*) with our minds altogether on the truth. For just as perception grasped the perceptible only, not the perceptible as true, so also imagination (*phantasia*) grasps only the impressions (*tupoi*), not the impressions as true, adding this much to perception, that it does not need the perceptibles which the impressions resemble to be always present, but projects the impressions from itself, and does not entirely follow what was originally seen, but adds, subtracts, transforms and elaborates in every kind of way. RRKS

(2) 'Simplicius' *in DA* 211,1-7

But conviction (*pistis*), which accompanies every rational and intellective cognition, is not present in any wild beast since irrational cognition cannot grasp something as being true, but is only cognition of the thing which it is able to cognise, being true but not judging the very fact that it is true. For the cognition which grasps that it is cognising the thing itself in general, or that it is doing so truly or falsely, turns (*epistreptikê*) towards itself, for it will itself cognise itself. HJB

'Philoponus'. Yes:

(3) 'Philoponus' *in DA 3*, 497,22-30

There is also involuntary imagination (*phantasia*), taken from mental images (*phantasmata*), that is, from perceptibles, and not just voluntary imagination, which he rightly said was a transferred usage, since it transfers from real things a fabrication of the unreal, for example from a horse (*hippos*) and a bull (*tauros*) a hippocentaur. So if there is involuntary imagination, I do not imagine (*phantazesthai*) what I wish (*thelein*), but by a single capacity for discriminating (*dunamis kritikê*) I imagine the false as false and the true as true. For it is by this that false is discriminated from true. Both opinion too and perception discriminate false from true in this way by recognising things as they are. RRKS

Note that both answers refer to the inventive character of imagination.

2(d) Is there ever *phantasia* of universals?

A.A. Long argues that the Stoics would allow *phantasia* of the square root of 2, for our concepts (*ennoiai*) and most mental states are *phantasiai*. But among the commentators *phantasia* of universals is allowed only in a restricted sense, according to 'Simplicius'. Thus the *phantasia* of ant, bee and grub is universal in the sense that it has not yet distinguished the particular. The idea draws on Aristotle's discussion in *Phys.* 1.1, 184b12-14, of how a child at first calls all men 'father', because it has not yet distinguished the particular, but has a confused universal. For interpretations of Aristotle's uncharacteristic statement at *An. Post.* 2.19, 100a17 that perception is of the universal, see below under **5(b)**.

(1) 'Simplicius' *in DA* 209,17-25

This third argument starts from perceptions and appearances (*phantasiai*) in act, and distinguishes their powers and substances, using three arguments in succession starting from the activities. One is that an impression (*tupos*) of each sense object does not occur in all animals, as it does in a dog, as is generally agreed to be the case, in a horse recognising his groom, and in many others. But in an ant or a bee or, more clearly, a worm there are

not well-defined impressions of each thing, but a more general one of food, and even if it is of the food in this grove, as in the case of bees, it is still not of that food in the discrete individual object, this flower. It is in this way that one must understand that appearance is not present in all, and not that it is not present at all. HJB

But Proclus postulates universals in the imagination in mathematics. Similarly, Proclus *in Eucl. 1*, 53,18-55,13 translated below **2(i)**.

(2) Proclus *in Eucl. 1*, 51,13-20

Assuming that the participants themselves are of two kinds, perceptibles and things that exist in the imagination (for matter also is of two kinds, as Aristotle somewhere says: the matter of things tied to perception and the matter of things in the imagination (*phantasta*)), we shall admit that the allocated (*katatetagmena* [i.e. distributed among particulars]) universals are of two kinds: one perceptible, being participated in by perceptible objects, and the other in the imagination (*phantaston*), existing in the plurality of things in the imagination. IM

Reading

A.A. Long, 'Representation and the self in Stoicism', in Stephen Everson, ed., *Psychology, Companions to Ancient Thought*, Cambridge 1991, 102-20, esp. 108.

2(e) The mental image or *phantasma* resides in the *pneuma*

The *pneuma* is the tenuous physical spirit in one's body.

(1) Philoponus *in DA* 158,7-20

In what sense do we say that when we remind ourselves of something (*anamnêsis*), the movement begins from the soul? It is not that the soul by itself reminds itself. Rather, just as we said in the case of the senses that the movement begins from the sense objects and goes through to the *pneuma* in which the discriminative and perceptive capacity resides, so we say that when we remind ourselves, the beginning of the reminding movement starts at the opposite end from perception, from the *pneuma* in which the soul resides. For the beginning of the reminding starts from the point at which perception terminates. Reminding oneself is a search for a mental image (*phantasma*), when that was produced in the *pneuma*, where mental images are produced and where the perceptual soul is also seated. The beginning of the reminding movements comes from the residual traces (*enkataleimmata*), which we call mental images, that are in the *pneuma* in which the soul resides. The soul held these residual traces after getting them from sensory apprehensions. RRKS

2(f) *Phantasia* and memory involve projecting

They involve projecting (*proballein, proballesthai*) into one's *pneuma* imprints (*tupoi*) which correspond to one's *logoi* (concepts). Porphyry applies projection to memory when he says, *Sentences* 15, 'Memory is not the preservation of imagination, but the projection (*proballestahi, probolê*) of newly rehearsed items' (RRKS). He is following Plato *Symposium* 207C-208B, where knowledge is not preserved, but constantly replaced by rehearsal. For a projected *logos* relating soul to body when ghosts are shaped by their souls' imaginative powers, see Porphyry *Sentences* 29 in **2(h)**. The use of projection in perception is ascribed to Iamblichus by Priscian in **1(b)**, and its use in geometrical visualisation to Iamblichus' favourites, the Pythagoreans, by 'Simplicius' *in DA* at **Logic and Metaphysics 12(b)**. Synesius, the late fourth-century bishop, is thought to draw on Porphyry.

Proclus *in Eucl. 1* treats the projection like projection in a modern cinema. He compares the screen of imagination with a mirror, 121,2-7; 141,2-19, and in a passage translated in **Logic and Metaphysics 5(c)** he contrasts the indivisible concepts in the projector with the extended representations on the screen, 53,18-55,13.

See **1(b)** for references to projection in perception, linguistic understanding, geometry, recollection and scientific distinctions.

(1) Synesius *On Dreams* ch. 4, 134B Terzaghi

The soul possesses forms (*eidê*) of what happens; it has them all, but projects (*proballein*) what is appropriate, and mirrors (*enoptrizein*) their appearance (*phantasia*) through which a living being has a grasp of the things that remain 'there'. RRKS

(2) Synesius *On Dreams* ch. 10, 142B-C Terzaghi

Insofar as the imaginative (*phantastikon*) *pneuma* is pure and well-defined and, awake or dreaming, receives true imprints of beings (*onta*), the human will have a promise of a better lot, so far as concerns the vehicle (I suggest *okhêmati*, cf. 137Aff; *mss.* have *skhêmati*, shape) of the soul. We track the condition (*diathesis*) of our soul's *pneuma* not least by mental images (*phantasmata*) which it projects (*proballein*) and around which it spends its time when it is not externally moved by something else. RRKS

(3) Proclus *in Eucl. 1*, 141,2-19

Therefore just as nature stands creatively above the visible figures, so the soul, exercising her capacity to know, projects (*proballei*) on the imagination (*phantasia*), as on a mirror, the concepts (*logoi*) of the figures, and the imagination, receiving the figures in the form of images (*eidôla*) and containing reflections (*emphaseis*) of what is within the soul, by their means affords the soul an opportunity to turn inward from the images (*eidôla*) and attend to herself (*eis to eisô strophê kai pros heautên energeia*). It is as if a man looking at himself in a mirror and marvelling at the power

of nature and at his own appearance (*morphê*) should wish to look upon his actual self (*heauton*) directly and possess such a power as would enable him to become at the same time the seer and the object seen. In the same way, when the soul is looking outside herself at the imagination, seeing the figures depicted there and being struck (*ekplagênai*) by their beauty and orderedness, she is adoring her own concepts from which they are derived; and though she adores their beauty, she dismisses it as something imaged (*en eidôlois*) and seeks her own beauty and wants to go past it to the inside. GM

(4) 'Simplicius' *in DA* 202,2-6

Then [he shows] that imagination (*phantasia*) is not the same as sense perception, since the latter for its own activity always needs the presence of sense objects stirring the sense organs, whereas the imagination is sometimes stimulated by itself even when they [sc. perceptibles] are not present and projects (*proballein*) the objects of cognition, having this capacity in common in a way with the rational faculties. HJB

(5) 'Simplicius' *in DA* 206,14-20, translated above under **2(c)**.

(6) 'Simplicius' *in DA* 213,32-214,6

The affection in the sense organ produced by the sense object is a movement, whereas the projection (*probolê*) of the concept (*logos*), and the pure judgement of the sensitive faculty, and the determination in accordance with the form (*eidos*) of the sense object, are not movement but an undivided activity. In succession to this the imaginative faculty (*phantastikê zôê*), being immediately adjacent, is stimulated, using the same organ but not as a sensitive one that is somehow affected from outside, but as an organ of the imagination impressed and shaped by the imaginative faculty. It is not surprising if the same vehicle is set below different faculties; indeed it underlies even the rational faculty. Not only the *pneuma* but also the solid instrument is affected by our rational activities. So the *pneuma* is affected primarily as being sensitive and, when sense perception is operative according to the activity in respect of the form, then the *pneuma* too becomes suitable for the reception of impressions (*tupoi*) which are objects of the imagination, and the imagination itself is stimulated to project (*probolê*) imaginative impressions (*tupoi*) in accordance with its own concepts (*logoi*) and in a way appropriate to the perceptual forms, sometimes not needing the perceptual impressions just once or twice for projecting similar ones, but more often. HJB

(7) Priscian *Metaphrasis in Theophrastum* 24,10-13

Or perhaps it is not the case that, in the way that sense is moved only when

its objects are present, so also is imagination, but rather, when it has been set in motion once, it can be aroused on its own account and project (*proballein*) the images (*phantasmata*) in accordance with their reference to the forms (*eidê*) which have set it in motion. PH

Reading

H.J. Blumenthal, *Plotinus' Psychology*, The Hague 1971, 88-95.
Murray W. Bundy, *The Theory of Imagination in Classical and Medieval Thought, Univ. of Illinois Studies in Lang. and Lit.* 12, 1927, 117-30.
John Dillon, 'Plotinus and the transcendental imagination', in J.P. Mackey, ed., *Religious Imagination*, Edinburgh 1986, ch. 2, 55-64.
Anne Sheppard, '*Phantasia* and inspiration in Neoplatonism', in M. Joyal, ed., *Studies in Plato and the Platonic Tradition for John Whittaker*, Aldershot 1997, 201-10.
Pamela Huby, 'Priscian of Lydia as evidence for Iamblichus', in H.J. Blumenthal, Gillian Clark, eds, *The Divine Iamblichus*, Bristol 1993, 5-13.
Thomas Welt in Thomas Dewender, Thomas Welt, eds, *Imagination-Fiktion-Kreation*, Munich & Leipzig 2003.

2(g) *Phantasia* and the vehicles of the soul: relation to prophecy, visions of gods

Prophecy was connected very early with the imagination, with vehicles of the soul only later. Already Plato, despite his hostility to images in some contexts, suggests in the *Timaeus* 71A-72C that the liver acts as a mirror, reflecting images (*phantasmata*) which can be used for divination, but true divination occurs only when the understanding (*phronêsis*) is fettered, for example by sleep, and needs to be interpreted subsequently by reasoning (*logismos*).

Aristotle gives exactly the opposite, a rationalistic explanation, in his *On Divination through Sleep*. Sleep gives us the quiet necessary for recognising neglected symptoms of imminent disease in our bodies.

The Middle Platonist, Plutarch of Chaironeia, takes up the connexion of prophecy with the imagination, *de Pyth. Or.* 397C; *de Def. Or.* 438A. And many Neoplatonists develop the *Timaeus*, giving a major role in divination to the imagination. But Augustine repeats Plato's warning that intellect is needed too.

The origin of the idea that the soul needs non-fleshly vehicles is described in **8** below. The soul is like a pearl which has the oyster as its body (Plato *Phaedrus* 250C6). But it also has two further vehicles, the grosser pneumatic vehicle and the finer luminous vehicle. Iamblichus thinks that the gods enable us to prophesy by illuminating our luminous vehicles and so giving us appearances (*phantasiai*). Proclus has a similar account of how the gods give us visions of themselves. Iamblichus is replying to the more materialistic assumptions of Porphyry's *Letter to Anebo*.

(1) Iamblichus *Myst.* 3.14, 132,9-15

This whole branch of prophecy of which you speak, diverse as it is, is embraced by a single power which one could call the introduction of light. This power illuminates with divine light the aetherial and luminous vehicle that surrounds the soul, and from this [divine light?] accordingly divine apparitions, moved by the will (*boulêsis*) of the gods, seize the imaginative power (*phantastikê dunamis*) in us. RRKS

(2) Proclus *in Remp.* 1.39,9-17

For in the case of those themselves who do see [the visions from the gods] they are seen by the luminous wrappings (*periblêmata*) of their souls. They are certainly often seen when the eyes are closed. Insofar as they [the visions] have extension and appear in air of a similar nature [i.e. extended] they subsist as akin to those who see them. Insofar as they project (*proballein*) a divine light and are active and present an image of (*epaneikonizein*) the powers of the gods through manifest symbols, they are derivative of the superior beings themselves who offer them. Therefore even the ineffable signs of those [beings] are given shape, some projecting one form, others another. RW

The vehicles are themselves sensitive.

(3) Proclus *in Remp.* 2.167,2-6

And since what is truly perception is found in the souls' vehicles, for every body lives by partaking in soul, and even when it is [a body] of a rational soul still lives by perception, and furthermore also needs perception when changing place; and every vehicle, while by nature related to a rational soul, is of such a kind .... RW

(4) Proclus *in Remp.* 2.167,17-23

This capacity [to hear the voices of daemons] is provided to some by the priestly power, to others by their natural constitution, just as there are visions which can be seen by [some] eyes through one or other of these means that are invisible to other eyes. And so the primary vehicle of the souls, in possessing the common [i.e. generic] sense, can by nature hear things which are inaudible to all mortal hearing, and see things invisible to mortal sight. RW

Theurgic rites help the pneumatic (*spiritalis*) soul which captures images and fit it to see the gods, although Porphyry considers that this help is limited.

(5) Porphyry *de Regressu animae*, with comments by Augustine *City of God* 10.9, Dombart and Kalb *CCL* 47, lines 13-25 (Bidez *de Regressu Animae* fr. 2, 27,21-28,19; includes Porphyry fr. 290F Smith)

Porphyry too, though hesitantly and with an almost shamefaced discussion, promises a certain quasi-purification of the soul by theurgy, but denies that this art can offer anyone return to God. So you can see that he wavers, with alternating opinions, between the vice of sacrilegious curiosity (*curiositas*) and the profession of philosophy. At one moment he warns that this art should be avoided as being deceptive, dangerous in use and

forbidden by the laws; at another, as if yielding to its supporters, he says it is useful for cleansing part of the soul, not indeed the intellectual part which grasps the truth of the intelligibles that have no resemblance to bodies, but the pneumatic (*spiritalis*) part, which receives the images (*imagines* = Greek *phantasiai*) of corporeal things. For this part, he says, by certain theurgic consecrations which they call *teletai* (rites), is made suitable and fit for the reception of spirits and angels and for seeing gods. But he acknowledges that from these theurgic rites (*teletai*) no purification reaches the intellectual soul to make it suitable for seeing its God and for perceiving that which truly exists. From this it can be understood what vision of what gods he says is achieved by theurgic (*theurgicus*) consecration, a vision in which that which truly exists is not seen. Finally, he says that the rational or, as he prefers to call it, the intellectual soul can escape to its own, even if its pneumatic part has not been purified by any theurgic art. GC

Synesius, Christian Neoplatonist and eventually bishop, *c.* 370-413 wrote *On Dreams* about divination through dreams. The imaginative *pneuma* is the first body of the soul. It mirrors images which flow from things. If we are to prophesy through dreams, it must, through philosophy, be kept free from disturbance by emotion, and the imagination must be purified by rites. Dreams should be recorded.

(6) Synesius *On Dreams* ch. 4, 134B-134C Terzaghi

Therefore, just as we also do not understand the activities of the mind before the supervisory (*epistatikê*) power makes an announcement to the combined system, and whatever does not reach that power is unknown to the living creature, so we do not even have a grasp of [the forms] in the first soul, before the imprints (*ekmageia*) of them reach imagination (*phantasia*). And this [imagination] seems to be a certain kind of life by itself which is a little lower down the scale, and stands at a unique point in nature. At any rate, there are sense organs present that correspond to it. For we see colours, and we hear sounds, and our grasp of touch-perceptions has the greatest impact, even though the instrumental parts of the body are inactive. And it is possible that this kind of perception is more sacred. In fact, by this kind of perception we often have contact with the gods who admonish us, who give oracular replies, and in general are concerned for our welfare. DGR

(7) Synesius *On Dreams* ch. 5, 135B-136B Terzaghi

Let this be understood by us as confirmation of the value accruing to the life in the realm of imagination (*phantasia*), against those who reject even its lesser roles. No wonder that they think in this way, who, in their infinite wisdom, cling to what is rejected by oracles. For the oracle says, 'No dissections of sacrifices and entrails – those are all frivolous playthings,' and instructs us to avoid them. But of these men, as being above the many,

some accept one, some another of the arts which look into the future and think it right to practise them; yet they overlook dreams as an obvious phenomenon, in which the unlearned and the sage partake with equal honour. Why, if one is wise by obtaining more of the common lot? For surely the other good things, and still more the greatest things, are present as commonly as may be. For example, among things visible nothing is more divine than the sun, nothing more communal. And if to behold God directly (*autoptêsai*) is a blessed thing, to grasp God by means of imagination (*phantasia*) is of a still more august vision (*autopsia*). For this is the perception of perceptions, insofar as the *pneuma* of imagination (*to phantastikon pneuma*) is the commonest organ of sense and the first body of the soul. But it lies hidden, and holds the directive power (*arkhê*) of the living being as though from a citadel; for nature has built around it the entire activity of the head.

[136A] Hearing and eyesight by contrast are not senses, but rather instruments which serve the common [i.e. generic] sense, like doorkeepers of the creature who announce to the queen the external perceptibles which knock on the door of the external organs. And this sense perception in all its parts is complete, for it hears and sees and exercises all its other powers with its whole *pneuma*. It distributes its powers severally to different places, and each [power] extends separately away from the living creature, and like straight lines flowing from the centre and meeting back in the centre, all being one according to the common root yet many according to the diffusion (*proödos*). Most animal in character, then, is the perception by means of the organs which are projected outwards, which is not perception before it reaches the primary perception. But the perception more divine and near to the soul is the immediate perception. DGR

The mechanism for prophecy became a major question for the religion of the Prophet, Islam. Kindi and Farabi were to stress the role of imagination, though Farabi saw it as influenced by reason. Ibn Tufayl postulated a supra-rational intuition.

Augustine agrees with Plato's *Timaeus*: prophecy requires not merely the images which affect the *spiritus*, but the interpretation which is due to the mind (*mens*). When Augustine says that someone who has only the images does have language, he is thinking of the 'linguistic imagination' of the Neoplatonists which can see words, but not interpret them. See **2(l)** for Proclus *in Crat.* sec. 51, 19,11 Pasquali.

(8) Augustine *Gen. Lit.* (*Literal Interpretation of Genesis*) 12.9.20, Zycha *CSEL* 28, pp. 391,4-392.7

Thus those for whom signs were represented in their spirits (*spiritus*) through certain images of corporeal things did not have prophecy, as long as their mind (*mens*) was not applied so that they could understand them; and a person who was able to interpret what another person had seen was a greater prophet than the person who had seen it. From that it seems

obvious that prophecy pertains more to the mind than to that spirit which is called spirit in the particular relevant sense, and which constitutes a faculty of the soul inferior to the mind, where likenesses of corporeal things are expressed. Thus Joseph, who understood what the seven ears of corn and the seven cows signified, was more of a prophet than Pharaoh, who had seen them in his dreams [*Gen.* 41,1-32]. The latter's spirit was formed so that he could see; the former's mind illuminated so that he could understand. Thus one had language, the other had prophecy; for one had imagination (*imaginatio rerum*), the other interpretation of imaginings. One who through images of corporeal things sees in his spirit only the signs of the things signified is less a prophet. More a prophet is one who is endowed only with understanding of those images. But most a prophet is the one who excels in both so as both to see in the spirit the likenesses signifying corporeal things and to understand the likenesses by the sharpness of his mind. Thus the excellence of Daniel was tried and proven when he both told the king the dream he had seen and revealed what it meant. The corporeal images themselves were expressed in his spirit; their understanding was revealed in his mind [*Dan.* 2,27-45; 4,16-24]. It is then in accordance with this way of speaking of spirit in distinction [from mind] that the apostle [Paul] said: 'I shall pray with the spirit, but I shall also pray with the mind' [I *Cor.* 14,15], so that the signs of the things should be formed in the spirit while the understanding of the signs shines in the mind. It is according to this distinction, let me say, that we have also called spiritual the sort of vision by which we 'think' images even of absent bodies. JL

Augustine is asked by Nebridius, if the heavenly powers, without using bodies, send us revelatory dreams, why can't we do that to others? Augustine replies that more intelligent spirits send us dreams by deliberately activating the traces left in our bodies by our own earlier thoughts.

(9) Augustine *Letter 8, Nebridius to Augustine*, Goldbacher *CSEL* 34

I am in such a hurry to come to the point that I want no preface or exordium. Dear Augustine, how or by what method do the superior powers, by which I mean the heavenly ones, when it pleases them, show us dreams, while we are asleep? What is, I ask, their method, i.e. how do they go about it, what technique, what mechanisms, what instruments or drugs do they use? Do they stimulate our minds with their own thoughts so that we also by thinking image the dreams? Or do they offer and show us dreams produced in their own body or imagination? But if they produce them in their body, it follows that we too have other bodily eyes within ourselves when we sleep, with which we see the things that they have formed in their body. However, if they are not aided to that effect by their own body, but arrange these events in their imagination (*phantasticum*) and so touch our imagination and there ensues a vision (*visum*), which is a dream, why, I

ask you, do not I, through my imagination, compel your imagination to generate the very dream which I myself formed first for myself in my imagination? Surely, I do possess an imagination (*phantasia*) and it is able to invent whatever I wish. However, I do not generate a single dream for you, but I see that it is our own body which generates dreams in ourselves. For when our body is ill, it compels us through a disturbance (*affectus*), by which it is linked to the soul, to simulate this very condition in wondrous ways by means of imagination. Often, when we are thirsty, while we are asleep, we dream that we are drinking, and when we are hungry it seems to us as if we are eating; and there are many similar experiences which are transferred in a kind of traffic from the body to the soul through imagination. JL

(10) Augustine *Letter 9.3 to Nebridius*, Goldbacher *CSEL* 34, pp. 20,25-21,12

For I think every movement of the mind does something in the body, and that goes as far as our senses, which are dull and slow when the movements of the mind are fairly strong, as when we are angry, sad, or joyful. From this one may conjecture that also when we think something, and it is not apparent to us in our body, nonetheless it may be apparent to aerial or aetherial creatures who have very sharp perception in comparison with which ours is not even to be considered perception. Thus those traces (*vestigia*), as I might call them, of its movement which the mind fixes in the body can also remain and create a certain disposition. When those traces are touched and agitated unobserved, in accordance with the will of the creature that does the touching and the agitating, thoughts and dreams invade us, and that happens with remarkable ease. RRKS

2(h) *Phantasia* and the vehicles of the soul: relation to shades in Hades, daemons, transmission of inheritable characteristics

The imprint on the pneumatic vehicle from *phantasia* forms the shades (*eidôla*) in Hades (a theory still used in seventeenth-century Islam by Mulla Sadra). Alternatively, Origen *Against Celsus* 2.60 makes it the superior luminous vehicle that accounts for ghosts. Daemons take shape by reproducing their *phantasiai* (appearances) on their pneumatic vehicles. Why then should not the soul in human seed shape the embryo in accordance with its *phantasiai*? On projection see **1(b)**; **2(f)**.

(1) Porphyry *Sentences* 29,18,7-13

But since in consequence of its attraction to the body it [the soul] has a particular rational principle (*logos*), which has been projected (*proballesthai*; cf. 19,8), and in conformity with this principle it has a relationship to a body of a certain type in which it lives, from this attraction an imprint (*tupos*) deriving from its imaging faculty rubs off on its pneumatic vehicle, and thus it comes to be dragging along its shade (*eidôlon*); it is said to be

'in Hades' (*Haidou*), because its pneumatic vehicle is of an 'invisible' (*aïdous*) and murky nature. JD

(2) Porphyry *To Gaurus* 6.1, 42,6-11

If we could take the mark of our images (*ha phantazomena*) on to our own bodies in the way that daemons (so the story goes) can make the forms of images (*phantasmata*) appear in the air-like *pneuma* which accompanies them or is available to them, not by colouring it in any way, but by making the reflections (*emphaseis*) of the imagination (*phantasia*) appear, ineffably, as if in a mirror, in the air which surrounds them: if that were so, we might conjecture that the imagination of the soul which is in the seed shapes the body to correspond with the soul. GC

Reading

Jean Pépin, 'Héraclès et son reflet dans le Néoplatonisme', in *Le Néoplatonisme*, CNRS, Paris 1971, 167-92.

2(i) *Phantasia* in geometry

Aristotle said that geometry studied the shapes in the physical world, but abstracted from the matter which makes them subject to change. Although this is conceded by Ammonius and Philoponus (see **Logic and Metaphysics 12(a)**), the Neoplatonists, Syrianus and his pupil Proclus, preferred to think that geometry conducts its proofs about the shapes created in our imaginations, even though these extended shapes are projected into the imagination from the unextended *logoi* (concepts) in our thought, and geometry would prefer, if only it could, to draw conclusions about those. Aristotle's abstraction would not produce geometrical exactitude. This was used as evidence that we must possess concepts (*logoi*), recollected in a Platonic manner from a previous life, which correct the inexact form located in sensible particulars, Porphyry in *Ptolemy's Harmonics* 14,32-15,6, translated in **1(b)** above. So also Proclus *in Eucl. 1* 12,9-13,27 (translated below), and in Syrianus *in Metaph.* 95,29-36; Olympiodorus *in Phaed.*, Lecture 12.1, 9-25 Westerink, translated in the main account of geometry and imagination in **Logic and Metaphysics 5(c)** and **12(b)**.

The general meaning of *logoi* (plural) is rational principles. Concepts are only one kind of rational principle. The wider and narrower applications are particularly clear in Proclus *in Eucl. 1*, 53,18-55,13 below, where I shall switch to the translation 'principle', but indicate where the principle happens to be thought of as a concept.

(1) Syrianus *in Metaph.* 91,22-4

Accept that magnitude is also of two kinds, the one in discursive (*dianoêtikos*) reason (*logos*), together with which its form in the imagination (*phantaston eidos*) arises, the other by abstraction from the perceptible, and do not say that geometry deals with what is abstracted. IM

(2) Syrianus *in Metaph.* 91,29-34

But you must say that geometry deals with things in the imagination (*phantasta*) insofar as these are parasitic on (*paruphistasthai*) the substantial concepts (*logoi*) of the mind (*dianoia*), which also provide the cause of demonstration, or rather that geometry wants to study the partless concepts (*logoi*) of the soul, but is too weak to be able to use thoughts (*noêseis*) not involving imagination and so spreads out (*ekteinei*) the concepts (*logoi*) into extended figures and magnitudes in the imagination and thus studies the concepts in *them*. IM

(3) Syrianus *in Metaph.* 186,17-19

...We would not be speaking off the mark about the divine Plato if we said that he made our imagination the place for mathematical bodies, just as matter is for enmattered forms .... IM

(4) Proclus *in Eucl. 1*, 53,18-55,13

You should think that the universal which is present in many things is of two kinds; there is one in perceptible things and one in things in the imagination (*phantasta*). And the principle (*logos*) of circle or of triangle or that of figure itself is of two kinds, the one applying to (*epi*) intelligible matter, the other to perceptible matter. Prior to these are the principle (*logos* – a concept) in the mind (*dianoia*), which gives existence to circles in the imagination (*phantastoi*) and the one form (*eidos*) in them, and the principle in nature, which gives existence to perceptible ones (since there are circles in the heavens and, in general, circles generated by nature). And just as the principle [concept] in the mind (*dianoia*) has no parts, so too the principle in nature has none; for extended things exist in an unextended way in incorporeal causes, things with parts exist partlessly, and magnitudes exist without magnitude, just as, conversely, things without parts exist with parts in corporeal causes, and things without magnitude exist with magnitude. Consequently the circle in the mind is one, simple, and unextended, just as magnitude itself in the mind is without magnitude, and shape is without shape – for such things are principles without matter – but the circle in imagination is divisible, it has shape, and it is extended; and there is not just one of them, but one and many; and it is not just a form, it is a form which is allocated [i.e. distributed among particulars] (*katatetagmenon*). However, the circle among perceptibles is also less precise, it is filled with straightness, and it lacks the purity of immaterial things.

[54,14] So when geometry says something about a circle and its diameter and its properties, for example, about tangencies and divisions of such things, let us say neither that its teaching is about perceptible circles – since it undertakes to make a separation from perceptible things – nor that

it is about the form in the mind (*en dianoiai eidos*). For the circle is one, but geometry makes statements about many circles; it projects (*proballein*) each of these circles with respect to one circle and studies the same things in all of them. That one circle is indivisible, but the circle in geometry is divisible. We must grant the geometer that he is investigating the universal, but this is the universal which is allocated [i.e. distributed (*katatetagmenon*)] in circles in the imagination (*phantastoi*). He sees one circle, he theorises with respect to another, the circle in the mind, and he makes his proofs about a different one. For the understanding has the principles (*logoi*), but, being too weak to see them in a folded way, it unfolds and develops them and leads them into the imagination (*phantasia*), which lies in the entryway [of understanding], and it unrolls its knowledge of them in imagination or with imagination, enjoying its separation from perceptible things, and finding matter in imagination (*phantastê hulê*) well prepared for receiving its own forms. So the insight of geometry involves imagination, the combining and dividing of figures occur in imagination (*phantastai*), and its knowledge (*gnôsis*) is a path to the intelligible substance (*dianoêtikê ousia*), but it has not yet reached those heights, since the understanding looks outside itself, and, although it studies these things with respect to what is inside itself and makes use of projections (*probolai*) of its principles (*logoi*), it moves from itself into what is outside it. IM

(5) Proclus *in Eucl. 1*, 51,13-20, translated under **2(d)** above.

(6) Proclus *in Eucl. 1*, 12,9-13,27

In the first place, if we say that mathematical forms (*eidê*) are derived from sense objects – that the soul, from seeing material circles and triangles, shapes in herself the later-generated (*husterogenôs*) form of circle and the form of triangle – whence come the exactness and certainty that belong to our concepts (*logoi*)? Necessarily either from sense objects or from the soul. But they cannot come from sense objects, for then there would be far more precision in sense objects than there is. They come therefore from the soul, which adds perfection to the imperfect sensibles and accuracy to their impreciseness. For where among sensible things do we find anything that is without parts, or without breadth, or without depth? Where do we see the equality of the lines from centre to circumference? Where the fixed ratios (*logoi*) of the sides? Where the rightness of angles? Do we not see that all sensible things are confused with one another and that no quality in them is pure and free of its opposite, but that all are divisible and extended and changing? How, then, shall we get the stable substance which unchangeable concepts (*logoi*) have, if they are derived from things that are ever changing from one state to another? For it is admitted that anything which results from changing beings receives from them a changeable character. And how can we get the exactness of precise and irrefutable

forms (*eidê*) from things that are not precise? For whatever yields knowledge that is steadfast has that quality itself in greater degree.

[13,7] We must therefore posit the soul as the generatrix of mathematical forms (*eidê*) and concepts (*logoi*). And if we say that the soul produces them by having their patterns (*paradeigmata*) in her own essence and that these offspring are the projections (*probolai*) of forms (*eidê*) previously existing in her, we shall be in agreement with Plato and shall have found the truth with regard to mathematical being. If, on the other hand, she weaves this enormous immaterial fabric and gives birth to such an imposing science without knowing or having preconceived (*proeilêphuia*) these concepts (*logoi*), how can she judge whether the offspring she bears are fertile or wind eggs [Plato *Theaetetus* 151E; 157D], whether they are not phantoms instead of truth? What canons could she use for measuring the truth in them? And how could she even produce such a varied mass of concepts (*logoi*) without having their essence (*ousia*) in herself? For thus we should be making their being (*hypostasis*) come about by chance, without reference to any standard. If, therefore, mathematical forms (*eidê*) are products of the soul and the concepts of the things that the soul produces are not derived from sense objects, mathematicals are their projections (*proballesthai*), and the soul's travail and her offspring are manifestations of eternal forms (*eidê*) abiding in her. GM

(7) Proclus *in Eucl. 1*, 121,2

And thus we must think of the plane as projected (*proballesthai*) and lying before our eyes and the mind (*dianoia*) as writing everything upon it, the imagination (*phantasia*) becoming something like a plane mirror to which the concepts (*logoi*) of the mind send down displays (*emphaseis*) of themselves. GM

(8) Proclus *in Eucl. 1*, 141,2-19, translated under **2(f)**.

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2(j) *Phantasia* has no images independent of sense-perception

Augustine uses the argument that you could not image, without experience, the taste of strawberries or cherries.

(1) Augustine *Letter* 7, ch. 3.6 Goldbacher *CSEL* 34, p. 17, 4-22

From where does it happen that we conceive things we do not see? What

do you think, but that there is a certain capacity (*vis*) located in the soul of diminution and augmentation, which necessarily it brings with it wherever it has reached? This capacity can be particularly noticed with respect to numbers. By its power it comes about, to take an illustration, that the image of a crow, formed as if directly present to the eyes, which has been registered by means of observations, by subtracting and adding certain features is drawn through into any image whatever never seen by human eyes. By this it happens that, as the thoughts revolve themselves in the usual way, figures of this kind rush into the thoughts just as if of their own accord in minds of this kind. So then it is made possible for the soul which forms images (*imaginare*), starting from these things which the senses have brought in, by subtracting, as was said, and adding, to generate things which it does not encounter in entirety by any of the senses though it has encountered parts of them in one thing or another. Thus when we were boys, born and reared on the mainland, even then we could imagine the seas from the sight of water in a small cup. However, the taste of strawberries and cherries in no way entered in our minds before in Italy we had the experience of tasting them. Hence it is that those who are blind from birth, when they are asked about light and colours, have no clue what to respond. For those who have never sensed them experience no coloured mental images (*imagines*). DGR

2(k) The role of will in imaging fictions

(1) Augustine *On the Trinity* 11.10.17, first half

But if we only remember what we have perceived with our senses and only think what we have remembered, why do we so often think false things? For surely we do not remember falsely what we perceived with our senses. [How can it be] unless that will (*voluntas*) of ours, which, as I have tried earlier to show, as far as I could, is a unifier and separator of things of that sort, directs the focus (*acies*) necessary for someone to conceive a thought, through the dark confines of the memory just as it pleases and, in order to make us think things we do not remember, makes the memory take one thing from things we do remember from here, another from there. When they are finally synthesized into one vision, they produce something which is called false. For either it does not exist among the corporeal things in the nature of the outside world, or it does not seem to be drawn from memory, i.e. we do not remember having perceived any such thing with our senses in the past.

Who, for example, has seen a black swan? No one can therefore remember having seen one. Yet who would not be able to think of one? For it is easy for us to paint the figure which we can think of from remembering having seen it before, in black, a colour, which we have seen in other bodies. Each we can remember, because each we have perceived. A four-footed bird I do not remember, because I have never seen one, but it is very easy for

me to entertain such a fantasy (*phantasia*), since to a flying shape, which I have seen, I add two extra legs, which I have seen likewise. Therefore since we think in combination things sensed separately and remembered, we seem to think what we do not remember. But we do this under the guidance of the memory, from which we draw everything which we arrange in manifold and various ways according to our will (*voluntas*). JL

2(l) Creative and linguistic imagination

Aristotle already used the idea, *Poetics* 17, 1455a23; *Rhetoric* 3.17, 1411b25, of the writer of tragedy putting the plot before his eyes and the user of metaphor putting things before our eyes. But there is a more important theme, the value of imagination in art. Cicero *Orator* 2.8-9 and Seneca *Ep.* 65,7-10 still refer only to the artist consulting Platonic Forms within himself, or as Cicero says, within thought (*cogitatio*) or mind (*mens*). Plotinus also stops short at 5.8 [31] 1 of explicitly mentioning imagination, though he comes a little closer. But earlier in the third century than Plotinus, Philostratus ascribes to the neo-Pythagorean Apollonius of Tyana, supposedly of the first century AD, the idea that the imagination (*phantasia*) of the sculptor Pheidias could make a statue of Zeus by reference to the real thing (*to on*). The contrast is with imitation (*mimêsis*) which merely copies what it has seen. Anne Sheppard has pointed out that Proclus *in Tim.* 1.320,5-10, allows that the first man to make a ship used his imagination to create a paradigm (*paradeigma*) within himself. A ship is an artefact and it may be significant that Plato denied that there were Platonic Forms available for artefacts, according to Aristotle *Metaph.* 991b6; 1070a18. But equally, as Sheppard points out, when Proclus comes to Pheidias' statue of Zeus, what Pheidias is said to have consulted is not a Platonic Form of anything, but merely the concept (*ennoia*) of Zeus in Homer. Proclus adds that he would have made a more beautiful statue, if he had been able to reach the intellective god himself, *in Tim.* 1.265, 18-22. Synesius, the bishop, claims that imagination in dreams has, with God's aid, helped him to express himself as a writer.

(1) Philostratus *Life of Apollonius of Tyana* 6.19

'Your Pheidiases,' he said, 'and Praxiteleses presumably went up to heaven, traced the forms of the gods and turned the forms into art, or was there something else which directed them in moulding?'

'There was something else,' said [Apollonius], 'a thing full of expertise (*sophia*).'

'What sort of thing?' he said, 'for you could not name anything except imitation.'

'*Phantasia* did this work,' said [Apollonius]. 'It is a craftsman more expert than imitation, for imitation will craft what it has seen, but *phantasia* even what it has not seen. For it will postulate it (*hupotithesthai*) by reference to reality (*to on*). And imitation is often overwhelmed by a shock (*ekplêxis*), but *phantasia* by nothing: exempt from shock, it goes towards what it itself postulated. RRKS

(2) Plotinus 5.8 [31] 1 (32-40)

If anyone denigrates the arts on the grounds that they create by imitating nature, it must be said first that the natures of things themselves imitate other [realities]. Secondly, one should know that the arts do not simply imitate what is seen, but run back up to the rational principles (*logoi*) from which nature derives. One should also know, next, that the arts, as being in possession of beauty, create and supply many things from themselves to what is deficient in anything. Then Pheidias created Zeus not by looking at anything perceptible, but by grasping (*labein*) how Zeus would come to look, if he wanted us to see him with our eyes. RRKS

(3) Proclus *in Tim.* 1.320,5-10

Just as with the craftsmen here, some can imitate other things accurately, while others have an ability to mould wonderful shapes and products needed for our use, like the first man to make a ship who moulded the paradigm (*paradeigma*) of the ship within himself by imagination (*phantastikôs*). RRKS

(4) Proclus *in Tim.* 1.265,18-22

Pheidias too, who made Zeus, did not look at what has come into being, but went to the concept (*ennoia*) of the Zeus in Homer. If he had been able to reach even to the actual intellective god himself, clearly he would have made his own work more beautiful. RRKS

(5) Synesius *On Dreams* ch. 14, 148A-B Terzaghi

[Divination through dreams] has often helped me work out my writing. It has prepared my mind (*nous*), made the diction fitting, crossed something out and substituted something else. Sometimes before now it has even criticised the whole construction of my language, when it was running riot, inflamed with neologisms, in emulation of what is alien, that is, ancient Attic Greek. It did this through God who told me something, or what something was or showed me how to smooth certain ingrained excrescences of language, brought me back to good sense and castigated my inflation. RRKS

Proclus compares to sculpted images (*agalmata*) of the gods the natural names of the gods by which they can effectively be invoked and which are made by Intellect. Intellect uses as a help 'linguistic imagination' (*phantasia lektikê*). It is the idea of linguistic imagination that influences Augustine when he says in *Gen. Lit.* 12.9.20 that although the imagination may have language, it is only mind (*mens*) that can make a prophetic interpretation of language (see in **2(g)** above).

(6) Proclus *in Crat.* sec. 51, 19,8-24 Pasquali

But wishing to institute likenesses (*homoiotêtes*) of real beings, similtudes which are in a certain way immaterial and the products of only the essence of reason, and using linguistic imagination (*phantasia lektikê*) as an aid, it [the power in the soul] brought forth from itself the essence of names. And as the art of 'telestic' ritual (*telestikê*) through certain symbols and ineffable signs makes the sculptures here like (*apeikazein*) the gods and makes these sculptures suitable for the reception of divine illuminations, so too by the same power of assimilation (*aphomoiôtikê*) the art of legislation institutes names as sculpted images (*agalmata*) of their objects when it copies (*apeikonizesthai*) through echoes of this sort or that the nature of real beings; and having instituted them it handed them on to men for use.

For this reason, the lawgiver is said to be an authority on the generation of names, and just as it is not reverent to transgress against the sculpted images of the gods, so it is not lawful to sin regarding names. For the legislative demiurge of names is Intellect which instils copies (*eikones*) of their patterns (*paradeigmata*) in them. And we must revere them because of their kinship to the gods. BD

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2(m) Imagination and inspiration

As Anne Sheppard has shown, Synesius and Hermeias, who is recording Syrianus' lectures, both allow that imagination can be inspired, and so, I would add, does Iamblichus before them. But Proclus, who also was a pupil of Syranius, and Olympiodorus, contrast imagination and inspiration. Proclus in regard to Poetry, *in Remp.* 1.177,7-196,13 Kroll, and Olympiodorus *Lectures on Plato's Phaedo* 6.2; 6.12 (Westerink 97-8; 103) and *in Alc.* 8,11-14,9 treat them as opposites.

(1) Iamblichus *Myst.* 3.14, 133,6-8

The imaginative power (*to phantastikon*) is inspired (*epitheiazei*) because it is aroused not by itself, but by the gods, to modes of imagination, when everyday human activity is entirely suppressed. RRKS

(2) Synesius *On Dreams* ch. 6 136D Terzaghi

Learn from ineffable philosophy by which the *pneuma* of the imagination

(*phantastikon*) is purified through rites and becomes possessed by god (*entheos*). RRKS

(3) Hermeias *in Phdr.* 85,23-7

Opinion (*doxa*) and imagination (*phantasia*) are said to be inspired (*enthousian*) whenever they discover arts and produce remarkable works, like Pheidias in sculpture and others in other arts, as Homer too said of the man who made the belt [of Herakles], 'May he never have crafted nor in future craft any other ...' [Homer *Odyssey* 11.612]. RRKS

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3. Thought

3(a) Intellect vs. reason

Plato distinguishes mathematical reasoning *dianoia*, from the dialectician's understanding (*noêsis*), and Aristotle distinguishes reasoning (*logos*) from a more intuitive kind of spotting of truths (*nous*), both of such universal truths as scientific definitions of natural kinds, and in ethics of such particular truths, so I have argued ('Aristotle on the role of intellect in virtue', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* n.s. 74, 1973-4, 107-29, repr. in A.O. Rorty, ed., *Essays on Aristotle's Ethics*, University of California 1980, 201-19), as 'this is what is required of us now'.

(1) Plato *Republic* 6, 511D6-E2

Now grasp for me that there are the following four attributes in the soul ranged over the four divisions [of the line]: place intellection (*noêsis*) over the topmost division, reason (*dianoia*) over the second, conviction (*pistis*) over the third, and conjecture (*eikasia*) over the last .... RW

(2) Aristotle *EN* 6.8, 1142a25-6

[Practical wisdom (*phronêsis*)], then, is opposed to understanding (*nous*), since understanding is of definitions, concerning which there is no reasoning (*logos*). RRKS

(3) Aristotle *EN* 6.11, 1143a35-b5

And understanding (*nous*) is of the last things in both directions. For there is understanding, not reasoning (*logos*), of the first definitions and of the last things. Understanding in scientific demonstrations is of the first, changeless definitions. Understanding in practical demonstrations is of the last thing, the contingent and the minor premise. For these are starting points [for reaching] the goal, since universals are from particulars. So one must have perception (*aisthêsis*) of these and this perception is understanding. RRKS

In Neoplatonism, reasoning (*logos*, *dianoia*, Latin *ratiocinatio*, *ratio*) is a step by step process, contrasted with intuitive *understanding*, conventionally in connection with this period translated 'intellect' (*nous*, Latin *intellectus*), which is sometimes the goal of reasoning.

(4) Boethius *Consolation* 4, prose 6, section 17, Bieler *CCL* 94

Therefore as reasoning (*ratiocinatio*) is to understanding (*intellectus*), that

which comes to be to that which is, time to eternity, the circle to the center, so is the fickle course of fate (*fati series mobilis*) to the unmoving simplicity of providence (*providentia*). DGR

The Neoplatonists distinguish the intellect as a hypostasis or level of reality above the Soul, whereas reason belongs to the level of Soul.

The discursive reason of the soul is described by Plotinus as successive, and taking time. Indeed, time is the life of the soul.

(5) Plotinus 3.7 [45] 11 (35-45)

Indulging in first one act and then another, and then yet another in sequence, [the soul] generated by its activity the sequence, and that which had not previously existed emerged in company with the discursive thought (*dianoia*) that followed its activity, because discursive thought was not yet active and its old life was not like its new one. So its life became different, and that difference contained different time. Therefore the extension of life contains time, and the everlasting forward progress of life everlastingly contains time, just as life that has gone past contains past time. If someone were to say that time is the life of the soul in movement, as it changes from one stage of life to another, would he have a point? BF

Reading

H.J. Blumenthal, 'Nous and soul in Plotinus: some problems of demarcation', in *Plotino e il Neoplatonismo in Oriente e in Occidente*, Rome 1974, repr. as Study 2 in his *Soul and Intellect*.

3(b) Relation of intellect and reason to pleasure and desire

For Plato, reason is not just ratiocinative, but has its own pleasures and desires. Aristotle arguably thinks differently. One might expect that step by step reasoning would involve the *desire* to understand, while understanding, suffering no lack, would involve not that desire, but the *pleasure* of understanding. This is recognised by Damascius *in Phileb.*13, translated below under **13(g)**, although he pleads that the pleasure is *due to* the preceding desire. But this does not yet settle whether the desire and pleasure should be thought of as incorporated within reason and intellect or as merely accompanying them. Plato tends to incorporate them, envisaging reason as not only thinking, but also loving, enjoying and being intent on understanding, and as being willing or unwilling, restraining and preventing in the interests of the better (*Phaedo* 114E; *Republic* 439C-D; 580D-581B; 583A; 604D; 606C), although later in the *Laws* he allows that people can be superlatively rational (*panu logistikoi*) without loving wisdom (689A-C), and in the *Philebus*, as Amber Carpenter has reminded me, he thinks it would be beneath the dignity of gods to gain pleasure from their intellection (21D-22C; 32E-33B).

Aristotle thinks received psychology sufficient for the purposes of ethics (*EN* 1.13, 1102a23-8), and is willing to echo Plato's idea that reason summons us to the good (1102b14-16). But in his own psychology I believe (but see Frede) he objects against Plato that desire should be seen as a capacity of the soul distinct from reason (*DA* 3.9, 432a22-b7). He further borrows a current (*EN* 6.13, 1144b21-4) distinction between reason and right reason, and recognises a rational faculty of

cleverness (*deinotês*, *EN* 6.12, 1144a23ff.) which does not imply love of wisdom, although he does think the life of philosophical understanding, such as God leads, must be the most pleasurable, *EN* 10.7, 1177a22-7.

This subject will be resumed below under **13(g)** on pleasure, since the Neoplatonists encountered further quite different problems in acknowledging the pleasurableness of intellection.

Reading

Michael Frede, Introduction to Michael Frede and Gisela Striker, eds., *Rationality in Greek Thought*, Oxford 1996, 1-28.

Richard Sorabji, 'The shifting concept of reason', ch. 6 in *Animal Minds and Human Morals*, London & Ithaca, NY 1993, 65-77.

3(c) Opiniative vs. scientific reason

The Middle Platonist Alcinous distinguishes opiniative from scientific reason (*doxastikos* versus *epistêmonikos logos*), in *Didaskalikos* ch. 4 at 154,25-9, translated under **1(a)** above. Opiniative reason is acquired empirically in Aristotle's manner from perceptibles, scientific reason by recollection in Plato's manner from intelligibles, and so a harmony is achieved between the two rival theories. We saw in **1(a)** that opiniative reason is used in sense perception for the *recognition* of what is being perceived. It was also suggested there that the Platonists were influenced by the Stoic concept of reason (*logos*) as a collection of concepts and preconceptions (*ennoiai, prolêpseis*, Galen *PHP* 5.3 = *SVF* 2.841), so that we should not be surprised to find talk of *logoi* in the plural. *Logoi* can be rational principles of any sort, but one kind of rational principle is the concept (see Proclus *in Eucl. 1*, 53,18-55,13 for both usages).

Syrianus uses the plural when he says:

(1) Syrianus *in Metaph.* 50,6-9

Yet [points and lines] are also in the mathematical solid, which, even if is not perceptible, is indeed in the imagination (*phantaston*), and further in opiniative concepts (*doxastikoi logoi*) and in intelligible forms (*noêta eidê*). RRKS

I follow Peter Lautner here in taking the codex reading, *doxastikois*, instead of the emendation *doxastois*. I also take from him the developments in Syrianus' pupil Proclus, who equates scientific reason (*epistêmonikos logos*, *in Tim.* 1.343,7-11) with discursive thought (*dianoia*). 1.248,7-252,10 explains the descending hierarchy of intellect (*nous*), discursive thought (*logos, dianoia*), opinion (*doxa*) and perception. Opinion (*doxa*) is put below discursive thought (*dianoia*), because although opinion has embraced (*periekhein*) and preconceived (*proeilêphe*) the concepts of perceptibles and knows their essences (*ousiai*), it does not, like discursive thought and science (*epistêmê*), or scientific reason (*epistêmôn logos, in Tim.* 2.120,22-8), know the explanation (*aitia dihoti*) behind their essences (*in Tim.* 1.248,11-12; 18-20; 257,7 and 29; cf. Philoponus *in DA* 1,13-5,23). We may recall Aristotle's contrast in *An. Post* 2.8-11 between knowing that a lunar eclipse is some kind of loss of light by the moon and knowing that it is a loss of light due to the earth's shadow, which, however, in *An. Post* 2.19, turns out to be discovered not by *dianoia*, but by *nous*.

3(c) Opiniative vs. scientific reason

Opinion (*doxa*) is below *dianoia*, but is not despised, because Plato *Tim.* 27D had made the sensible world, whose physics he is discussing, an object of *doxa*. When completed by *nous* and *dianoia*, it can contemplate the divine plan and teach physics to other people, Proclus *in Tim.* 1.223,16-30. It detects illusions, 1.249,29-250,12, and has mathematical number resident within, Proclus *in Eucl. 1*, 95,21-96,11, translated in **Logic and Metaphysics 12(c).**

The talk of preconception is common in the passages translated under **1(a)** and **1(b)**, Porphyry *On Ptolemy's Harmonics* 14,32-15,6 Düring; Proclus *in Tim.* 1.292,27-293,5; Priscian *Metaphrasis* 2,26-3,9; 'Simplicius' *in DA* 126,1-16, and the need for opiniative reason for knowing bodies was asserted there by Priscian *Metaphrasis* 19,9-13. Discursive thought is said at Proclus *in Tim.* 1.223,16-26 to project (*proballein*) scientific distinctions, while opinion is allowed by Philoponus, *in DA* 5, to project concepts as it recollects them. For more on projection see **1(b)**, **2(f)**, **2(i)** and **Logic and Metaphysics 7(h)**, **5(c)** and **12(b).**

(2) Proclus *in Tim.* 1.248,14-22 Diehl

Discursive thought (*dianoia*) knows both the essences (*ousiai*) and the explanations of perceptibles together, while perception knows neither, for it is clearly shown in [Plato's] *Theaetetus* [186C] that perception is ignorant of *ousia*, and learns absolutely nothing of the explanation of what it knows. Hence it is necessary that opinion (*doxa*), which is arranged in between [these two] should know the essences of perceptibles through the concepts (*logoi*) in itself, but should be ignorant of the causes. For in this way correct opinion will differ from scientific understanding (*epistêmê*), by knowing only the fact (*to hoti* [cf. Aristotle, *An. Post* 2.1]), whereas scientific understanding can study its explanation as well. RRKS

(3) Proclus *in Tim.* 2.120,22-9

But those who wrote against [Theophrastus, FHS&G 159] on behalf of Plato say that knowing only the fact (*to hoti*) of things in nature is knowledge without reason, and there is opiniative (*doxastikê*) or perceptual apprehension of them, but to add the why (*dioti*) as well and seek their explanations in reality is the work of intellect (*nous*) and discursive thought in science (*dianoia epistêmon*). This is how correct opinion differs from scientific reason (*epistêmôn logos*). We hear both parties, but think the second [just reported] are right. RRKS

(4) Proclus *in Tim.* 1.223,16-19; 24-30

Part of the entire rational soul is intellect (*nous*), part discursive reason (*dianoia*), part opinion (*doxa*). The first fits with the gods, the second projects (*proballein*) sciences and the third announces them to other people ....

There remains the opiniative part (*doxastikon*) which first receives from discursive reason the scientific division and then conveys it to other people. This is not doubtful, nor split up among perceptibles, nor does it have its knowledge (*eidêsis*) confined among suppositions (*hupolêpseis*) alone, but

when completed from intellect and discursive reason, it contemplates the plan (*logos*) of the Demiurgic Creator and discriminates (*diakrinein*) the nature (*phusis*) of things. RRKS

Reading

Peter Lautner, 'Different types of logoi in empirical knowledge and noetic understanding in Syrianus', in R. Baine Harris, ed., *Neoplatonism and Contemporary Thought* Part 2, Albany NY, forthcoming.

Ian Mueller, Foreword to the 1992 edition of Proclus, *A Commentary on the First Book of Euclid's Elements*, translated by Glenn Morrow, Princeton, New Jersey 1992.

Lawrence P. Schrenk, 'Faculties of judgement in the *Didaskalikos*', *Mnemosyne* 44, 1991, 347-63

David Sedley, 'Alcinous' epistemology', in Keimpe Algra, Pieter W. van der Horst, David T. Runia, eds, *Polyhistor: Studies Presented to Jaap Mansfeld*, Leiden 1996, 300-12.

3(d) Non-discursive thought: is it propositional?

Aristotle discusses a kind of thinking in which we do not predicate anything of anything (*ti kata tinos*), nor make an assertion (*kataphasis*). This thinking is of incomposite subjects (*asuntheta, adiaireta*). Reference is made to the question what a thing is and what it is in respect of its essence. In this kind of thinking you cannot be mistaken, but only contact or not contact the subject. God's thinking is like this. This thought is often taken to be non-propositional, i.e. it does not have the complexity of the thought that something is the case. On the other side, it has been argued (Sorabji) that it could be thinking of definitions of non-complex entities. For definitions are sometimes taken as identity statements, and so as referring not to two entities, but to one. Aristotle suggests that you cannot be *wrong* about the definition of an incomposite, for you would have failed to make contact (*thinganein*) with the subject at all, and so would not be saying something false of it.

(1) Aristotle *DA* 3.6, 430b26-9

An individual utterance (*phasis*) [says] something of something, as does a denial (*apophasis*), and each one is true or false. But not every act of thinking (*nous*) [is true or false], but the act of thinking what [a thing] is, in accordance with its essence (*ti ên einai*) is [directly] true, and not [a case of saying] something of something. ARL

(2) Aristotle *Metaph.* 9.10, 1051b17-33

But what is it to be or not to be, and [to be] true and [to be] false, in the case of incomposites? For [this] is not [a case of being] composite, so as to be, when it is put together, and not to be, if it is divided, as [when] the log is white, or the diagonal is incommensurable; nor will [being] true and [being] false still apply in a similar way as in those cases. Or rather just as not even [being] true is the same in these cases, so neither is being, but [being] true or false does exist, for to be in contact (*thigein*) [with the

incomposite thing] and to utter it [constitutes being] true (for assertion (*kataphasis*) and utterance (*phasis*) are not the same), while to be ignorant [of it] is to be not in contact (*thinganein*) [with it] – for to be deceived about the essence (*ti esti*) [of something] is not possible except incidentally (*kata sumbebêkos*). And similarly in the case of incomposite substance (*ousia*), for [there too] one cannot be deceived; and all [of these] are in actuality and not in potentiality, for [otherwise] they would come to be and pass away; but as things are, what is (*to on*), itself, neither comes to be nor passes away, for it would come to be from something. Indeed those things which are what it really is to be something (*hoper einai ti*) and are actualities – in the case of these one cannot be deceived but must either think (*noein*) them or not; but their essence (*ti esti*) is sought, and whether they are of such and such a kind or not. ARL

In Plotinus, however, as Lloyd has replied to Sorabji, the thinking of intellect is viewed as non-propositional, in contrast to the discursive thinking of reason. The gods do not see propositions (*axiômata*), but images (*agalmata*). We may compare Egyptian hieroglyphs, or if Plotinus did not mean hieroglyphs (see **16** below), ideograms on their temple walls, which being *agalmata*, do not imitate the utterance of *axiômata*, but are all together at once (*athroon*). The objects of intellect are not premisses (*protaseis*), *axiômata*, or statements (*lekta*). Cf. 1.3 [20] 4 (19), quoted below under **15(b)**.

(3) Plotinus 5.8 [31] 5 (19) – 6 (12)

We must not then think that the gods or those who surpass happiness there see propositions (*axiômata*), but each of the things spoken of there is a beautiful icon (*agalma*) such as someone [Plato *Symposium* 215B; 216E] imagined in the soul of the wise man, but an icon not drawn, but real. And that is why the ancients said the ideas were real beings.

[6] The wise men of Egypt too, I think, grasped by punctilious or even inborn understanding (*epistêmê*) that, when they wanted to reveal something through their wisdom, they should not use the imprint of letters, which expound statements (*logoi*) and premises (*protaseis*), nor use those which imitate the voiced utterances of propositions (*axiômata*), but should draw icons (*agalmata*) and imprint in their temples one icon each for each thing, to express the non-expositoriness (*ou diexodos*) of that [world]. The implication is that each icon is a kind of understanding (*epistêmê*) and wisdom and a holistic subject, and is not a discursive process of reasoning or planning. Rather, it was later that people discovered from that science which exists all together at one go a representation in another medium, a representation now unfolded and describing expositorily both it and the reasons why it is like this. RRKS

(4) Plotinus 5.5 [32] 1 (37-9)

But if [the intelligibles] are without intelligence and life, what are they?

For they are not premises (*protaseis*), or propositions (*axiômata*), or things said (*lekta*). RRKS

(5) Plotinus 5.8 [31] 4 (47-9)

But we have not reached understanding (*sunesis*) because we have thought the sciences too were theorems (*theôrêmata*) and an assemblage of propositions (*protaseis*). RRKS

In Proclus, Lloyd allows, higher thinking may be propositional. He cites a passage concerned with the thought of the henads, which reside above the level of Intellect, just below the One.

(6) Proclus *in Parm.* 72,33-74,2 Klibansky

For if I ought to say what I think, affirmations (*affirmationes*) belong instead to the henads, since in them there is also the capacity for generating beings. The First [sc. the One], however is both before all capacity and before affirmations. VC

Jan Opsomer has drawn my attention to a number of further passages. On the one hand, Proclus contrasts intellective thought, as involving complexity, and so perhaps propositions with the ineffable knowledge (*arrêtos gnôsis*) of the higher gods in the following passage.

(7) Proclus *Platonic Theology* 1.21, 98,7-10 Saffrey-Westerink

The gods know all things together, wholes and parts, beings and non-beings, eternal things and temporal, not in the way that intellect (*nous*) knows the particular by the universal and non-being by being, but everything directly. RRKS

On the other hand, in two passages translated below under **16**, Proclus seems to go the other way. Discussing the Forms in the Demiurgic Intellect, he contrasts intellect which thinks them all as one, with soul which sees them one by one (*kath' hen*), Proclus *in Parm.* 807,29-809,24 Cousin. Again, commenting on Plato *Timaeus* 28C3-5, Proclus says that the Demiurgic Intellect can be discovered (*heurein*) only by a direct intuition (*epibolê autoptikê*), a contacting (*epaphê*) and a union (*henôsis*) with that intellect, and that it cannot be described (*exangeilai, exenenkein*) to others by nouns, verbs, or by any combination (*sunthesis*) or detailing (*diexodos*), since these would not bring out its simplicity, Proclus *in Tim.* 1.301,22-302,1; 302.8-14; 303.12-16 Diehl.

(8) Aristotle *Metaph.* 12.9, 1075a5-7

Again, there remains a question whether the object of [divine] thought is composite, for it would then shift between the parts of the whole. Rather, everything that lacks matter is indivisible. RRKS

(9) Plotinus 5.3 [49] 10 (25-44)

All that Intellect thinks in the strict sense must be both the same and different in relation to it. Again each of the objects of thought conveys together with itself (*sunekpherein*) this sameness and difference. Otherwise what will that which contains no differentiation think? For if each object is a forming principle, there will be a plurality. So it gains knowledge of itself by being a diverse organ of vision, or by being an organ capable of seeing diverse colours. For if it were directed towards a unity without parts, it would be nonplussed – for what could it say about it or how could it understand it? For if what is entirely without parts had to declare itself it would first need to declare all that it is not, and in this way would be a plurality in order to be unity. Again when it declares 'I am this', if it declares the 'this' as something other than itself, it is lying; if it is accidental to it, then it will be declaring a plurality – or else it will be declaring 'I am I am' or 'I I'. What then if it were simply a duality and declared 'I and that'? Well, it is bound in that case to be a plurality, since there is a distinction and a how for the distinction – there is now number and many other items. Therefore it is necessary for the thinker to embrace a variety of objects, and for the object of thought, as it is being thought, to be diverse. Otherwise there will be no thought of it, but just contact and, so to speak, an unexpressed and unconceived touch, something prior to thought (*pronoein*), since thought would not yet exist, and what is in contact not yet be thinking. BF

Reading

M. Alfino, 'Plotinus on the possibility of non-discursive thought', *Ancient Philosophy* 8, 1988, 273-84.

H.J. Blumenthal, *Plotinus' Psychology*, The Hague 1971, ch. 8.

John Bussanich, 'Non-discursive thought in Plotinus and Proclus', in *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* 8, 1997, 191-210.

Michel Fattal, 'La composition des concepts dans le *De Anima 3.6* d'Aristote, Commentaires grecs et arabes', *Revue de Études Grecques* 108, 1995, 371-87.

Michel Fattal, 'L'inellection des indivisibles dans le *De Anima 3.6* d'Aristote, Lectures arabes et modernes' in G. Romeyer Dherbey, ed., *Corps et Âme, Sur le De Anima d'Aristote*, Paris 1996.

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A.C. Lloyd, 'Non-propositional thought in Plotinus', *Phronesis* 31, 1986, 258-65.

A.C. Lloyd, *Anatomy of Neoplatonism*, Oxford 1990, 166-8.

Lucas Siorvanes, *Proclus: Neoplatonic Philosophy and Science*, Edinburgh 1996, 154-9; 165ff.

Richard Sorabji, *Time, Creation and the Continuum*, London & Ithaca, NY 1983, ch. 10: 'Myths about non-propositional thought'.

3(e) Plotinus' undescended soul

Plotinus puts forward as an innovation that humans have besides their lower souls, a soul that has not descended from the intelligible world (sometimes called soul's intellect, as reported below in **18(b)**(1), an expression from Aristotle's *DA* 3.4, 429a22, to distinguish it from higher intellect). It is, like Aristotle's active intellect,

uninterruptedly thinking, and this requires the further idea that the thought is usually unconscious. Most of Plotinus' successors from Iamblichus on rejected the idea, except for Theodore of Asine. But it has been pointed out that Iamblichus accepts some such idea for certain special souls.

(1) Plotinus 4.8 [6] 8 (1-11)

If I am to be bold enough to express more clearly my own opinion against that of others, not even our soul descends in its entirety, but part of it always remains in the Intelligible World. But if the part that is in the Sensible World conquers – or rather if it is conquered and disturbed – then it does not allow us to have perception of what the higher part is contemplating. For the object of our intellection reaches us only when it arrives at our perception as it descends; for we do not cognise everything that happens in any part of our soul until it reaches the entire soul. For example, appetite which remains in the appetitive faculty is known to us only when we apprehend it with our powers of inner perception (*hê aisthêtikê hê endon dunamis*) or those of reasoning, or both. BF

Proclus records objections, which he ascribes to Iamblichus: if we have an undescended soul, how do we sin, why are we not happy? Further why does Plato's *Phaedrus* 248Aff. say that our souls fall?

(2) Proclus *in Tim.* 3.333,28-334,15

Taking this as our starting-point let us speak frankly to Plotinus and the great Theodorus who take care to preserve an impassible element in us, one which is always in contemplation (*noein*). For Plato adopts only two circuits for the nature of the soul, and he shackles the one, and shakes up the other, so that neither the shackled one nor the shaken one is capable of operating intellectually. So divine Iamblichus was right to argue with those who believe this. What is it in us which goes astray when the motions of irrationality make us rush after some object of unbridled imagining (*phantasia*)? Is it our choosing (*proairesis*)? Well how could it not be so, because it is this in which we differ from creatures that follow their imaginings automatically. But if it is our choosing that errs, how could the soul be without fault? What is it that makes the whole of our life happy (*eudaimôn*)? Is it not reason having its own particular excellence? Surely we shall affirm as much. But if the whole of us is happy whenever the best element in us is perfect, then what is there to prevent all of us humans even now being happy, assuming that the highest element in us is ever in contemplation and ever in contact with things divine? For if this is the intellect (*nous*), then that makes no difference to the soul; but if it is a part of soul, then the rest [of the soul] too is happy. HT

Plotinus would have had answers to these questions, and some can be inferred from his treatment of the soul's freedom from emotion (*apatheia*), described below under

13. It has been said that his thought went through three stages. First, he considered that the whole soul can by purification reach freedom from emotion. Next, he wondered if all soul was already exempt from change, as Aristotle says that (in a sense) it is, *DA* 2.5, 417a31-b16; 418a1-3; 1.3, 406a3-12; b7-8; 1.4, 408b5-18; *Phys.* 8.5, 258a7; a19, but saw that he must then explain (as he tries to) why it needs purification. Finally, he maintains that only the undescended soul is free from emotion. Besides the passages quoted below in **13**, there are others where Plotinus explains that the soul is not sinless, because the lower soul compounded with the body is what sins. On the other hand, the Stoic paradox that a man can be happy when roasted in the brazen bull of the tyrant Phalaris is true, but only because of his undescended soul.

Plotinus seeks support for his idea of our undescended soul in the account found in Homer *Odyssey* 11.601-2 of the shade (*eidôlon*) of Heracles being in Hades, but he himself being with the gods. Plotinus does feel a slight difficulty in the fact that Heracles was not exactly an intellectual type ('not contemplative enough'). The question of what Heracles remembers is discussed by Plotinus and others in passages translated below under **12(e)**.

(3) Plotinus 1.1 [53] 12 (1-39)

But if the soul is without faults, why is it that there are punishments? For this account is at variance with the general account which says that it does have faults, can be corrected, is punished and even exchanges bodies in Hades? You can lend your support to whichever account you like; you could easily find a way of reconciling them. For the account which attributes faultlessness to the soul posits a simple entity that is the same in all respects, saying that 'a soul' and 'being a soul' is the same thing; but the account which allows that it does wrong weaves into it an additional form of soul which undergoes these terrible sufferings. So the soul itself becomes a compound, the composite of all its parts, and is affected in its entirety; it is the compound that does wrong and it is this, not the former, which is punished. That is why Plato says, 'we have seen it as those who look on the sea monster Glaukos' [*Republic* 10, 611C7-D1]. If anyone wants to see its true nature, he must 'peel away the accretions' and 'look at its love of wisdom' and see 'what it is in contact with' and 'to what it is akin to be just what it is' [cf. *Republic* 10, 611E1-612A4]. So its life and activities are one thing, and what is punished is another. Its rising up and separation are not only from this body, but from all its accretions. For such accretions are part of its birth – or rather its birth belongs to the other form of soul.

[21] How its birth occurs has been explained: it descends, and something else – the part that descends – comes into being from it in the downward movement (*neusis*). So does the soul reject this image (*eidôlon*)? And how is this downward movement not a fault? Well, if the downward movement is an illumination (*ellampsis*) of what is below, it is not a wrongdoing, just as it is not the shadow itself but the thing illuminated which is at fault. For if there were no such object, it would not have anything to illuminate. So the soul is said to descend and to move downwards because what is illuminated by it lives conjointly with it. It rejects its image if the recipient

is not in close proximity; it rejects it by not being severed, but because it no longer exists; it no longer exists when its gaze is entirely directed to the world there.

[31] Homer seems to make this separation in the case of Heracles when he puts his shade (*eidôlon*) in Hades but Heracles himself among the gods; he holds to both accounts, that he is both among the gods and in Hades, and that is why he made him twofold. Perhaps the account could be made convincing in this way: Heracles had practical virtue and for his nobility was considered to be a god; but because he was practical and not contemplative enough to merit his being entirely among the gods, part of him remains above, and part below. BF

(4) Plotinus 1.4 [46] 13 (5-12)

The most important lesson is always to hand, present with him even if he is inside the so-called Bull of Phalaris and then all the more – an experience which they [the Stoics] call pleasant to no avail, however often they say so. For in their [Stoic] philosophy what cries out is the very thing that is undergoing the pain, while in ours the thing feeling the pain is one thing, while whatever is forced to accompany that thing but does not fail in its vision of the entirety of goodness is another. BF

There is a passage in Simplicius saying that Iamblichus believed after all in undescended soul and this can be explained by the fact recently brought to notice (van den Berg) that Iamblichus allowed something of the kind for certain special souls.

(5) Simplicius *in Cat.* 191,8-12

Intelligible entities, which are without matter, exist simultaneously with the knowledge which always exists in actuality, whether there is some such knowledge in us, always remaining above (as Plotinus and Iamblichus think), or whether it is in the actualised intellect – if anyone chooses to call that intellection knowledge. BF

(6) Damascius *in Phaed.* I §548 Westerink (= Iamblichus fr. 5, Dillon)

How can Iamblichus say the opposite concerning the souls which make a full return? We may give *mutatis mutandis* all the same arguments: these souls never descend, either during a certain period in which the cause of descents is not compelling, or as far as it is up to their own life, which is not inclined towards becoming, or, thirdly, in accordance with the type of their life which makes a descent without generation and without rupture of their contact with the intelligible world. He himself writes thus in his letters, while defending his own doctrine in the third of the above mentioned ways. RvdB

(7) Hermeias *in Phaedr.* 215,12-26 Couvreur (= Iamblichus fr. 7 Dillon), commenting on *Phaedrus* 259B

[Plato *Phaedrus* 259B]: 'It is said that these [cicadas] were once humans from the generations before the Muses were born, but when the Muses were born and song appeared, some of the people who existed then were smitten (*ekplêttesthai*) with pleasure, so that while singing they neglected food and drink until imperceptibly they killed themselves'. RRKS

And the exegesis of [*Phaedrus* 259B5-D9] by the divine Iamblichus will now be put forward: he says that the 'humans' are the souls which spent time in the intelligible realm. For the souls, before they live their mortal lives, are above in the intelligible world, contemplating the Forms themselves and being together with the hypercosmic gods. Thus the humans were in such a state before 'the Muses were born', that is the spheres and the perceptible cosmos. This 'before' should not be understood in a temporal sense, but as before this emanation of the spheres in the visible domain took place. For this is the birth of the Muses: the manifestation originating from the Demiurge in the perceptible cosmos. The humans were thus in the intelligible cosmos. Thus the Muses and the spheres and the perceptible cosmos and the universal soul of the whole cosmos were born at the same time, and together with them stepped forth also the particular souls of humans. And since they had only been 'recently initiated' (sc. into the vision of the Forms) and remembered the intelligible realm, they were averse to the world of becoming and did not want to eat or drink, that is they preferred not to partake in sensory opinion. For they had intelligible food. For that reason they died because of starvation of the things here, which stands for the fact that they were elevated. RvdB

(8) Iamblichus *DA ap.* Stobaeum 1,379,22-4 Wachsmuth

Moreover pure and perfect souls enter purely into their bodies without passions and without being deprived of intellection. RvdB

Damascius does not agree with Plotinus' undescended soul. Rather, he argues against Proclus' view (Steel, I. Hadot) that time, like other affections, attaches only to the soul's activities, not to its essence. This view of Proclus is discussed below under **6(a)**, where the passages are translated, and under **13(d)**. Damascius' objection in the present passage is that, if Proclus withholds time from the soul's essence, he will get the result he does not want: Plotinus' timeless and undescended soul (cf. *in Parm.* 264,11ff.).

(9) Damascius, *in Parm.* Ruelle vol. 2, 254,3-7

Moreover, substance that is entirely not subject to change is eternal, nor does it at one time descend into coming into being, and at another ascend out of coming into being; rather it is always above. If this is true, then it

will maintain an activity that is always above as well, so that Plotinus' doctrine is true, namely that the soul does not descend in entirety. SR

There are many other rejections of Plotinus' undescended soul, to set against Theodorus' acceptance, including further testimony on Iamblichus' (qualified) rejection.

(10) Proclus *in Alc. 1*, 227,2-7 Westerink

Nor, on the other hand, will we admit the arguments that say that the soul is a part of the divine being, a part similar to the whole and always perfect, and that disturbance and the emotions are concerned only with the living organism. Those who say this make the soul ever perfect, ever wise, never in need of recollection, ever free from emotions and never corrupted. JO

(11) Proclus *in Parm.* 948,14-20 Cousin

It is neither necessary to situate the intelligible world within ourselves, as some claim, in order for us to know that the intelligibles are in us (for they transcend us and are the cause of our being); nor should we say that some part of our soul remains above, so that through this we are in contact with the intelligibles. JO

(12) Proclus *ET* 211

Every particular soul, when it descends into temporal process, descends entire: there is not a part of it which remains above and a part which descends. For suppose that some part of the soul remains in the intelligible. It will exercise perpetual intellection, either without transition from object to object or transitively. But if without transition, it will be an intelligence and not a fragment of a soul, and the soul in question will be one which directly participates an intelligence; and this is impossible. And if transitively, the part which has perpetual intellection and that which has intermittent intellection will be one substance. But this is impossible, for they differ in kind, as has been shown; and it is, moreover, unaccountable that the highest part of the soul, if it be perpetually perfect, does not master the other faculties and render them also perfect. Therefore every particular soul descends entire. ERD

(13) Hermeias *in Phaedr.* 160,1-4

One may gather from this passage [*Phaedr.* 248B] that according to Plato the soul descends in its entirety, since he says that its highest part, namely the charioteer, is corrupted; and it is not as Plotinus says that part of it descends and another part remains up there. JO

(14) 'Philoponus' *in DA 3*, 535,12-16

So Plotinus says that what he [Aristotle] calls 'actual (*energeiai*) intellect' is human intellect that thinks always. Plutarch [of Athens], however, and this is our position too, does not think that intellect in us is of two kinds but simple, and this simple intellect, he says, is not always thinking but thinks sometimes. Plutarch, then, believes that by 'actual intellect' he means human intellect, which he also believes to think sometimes. WC

(15) 'Simplicius' *in DA* 6,8-15

So our soul is at the same time at rest and being transformed because of its intermediate position between things that remain wholly at rest and things that are transformed altogether, having some kinship with both extremes, as it is in a way divided [*cf.* Plato *Tim.* 35A-B] and, as if indivisible, simultaneously comes to be and is present ungenerated, in a manner passes away and is preserved imperishable. So we shall not posit that some part of it remains behind always unchanging and pure, as Plotinus does, nor that it proceeds altogether as it tips into coming to be. But it proceeds as a whole and remains behind in purity as it tips towards secondary being. JOU

(16) 'Simplicius' *in DA* 220,12-17

So it does not remain always in the same condition, as *Plotinus thinks, nor does it go out from inside in such a way as to depart from itself altogether (for it would no longer go out nor would it remain entirely) since its substance is realised in its turning towards itself. Indeed all Aristotle's discussion here is about the rational soul, and not about the intellect which is immediately participated by it. HJB

*Blumenthal emends the *ms.* reading 'Plato' (reference to *Phaedo* 79C) to Plotinus.

Reading

I. Hadot, *Le Problème de Néoplatonisme Alexandrin: Hiéroclès et Simplicius*, Paris 1978, 171-2.

J. Pépin, 'Héraclès et son reflet dans le Néoplatonisme', *Le Néoplatonisme*, Colloque de CNRS, Royaumont, Paris 1971, 167-92.

John Phillips, 'Plotinus and Iamblichus on proairesis', *Ancient Philosophy* 15, 1995, 135-53.

John Rist, 'Integration and the undescended soul in Plotinus', *AJP* 88, 1967.

John Rist, 'Prohairesis: Proclus, Plotinus et alii', in H. Dörrie, ed., *De Iamblique à Proclus*, Fondation Hardt, Entretiens 21, Geneva 1975.

Carlos Steel, *The Changing Self*, Brussels 1978, ch. 2 and ch. 5, 116-17.

R.M. van den Berg, 'Proclus and the myth of the charioteer', *Syllecta Classica* 8, Iamblichus the Philosopher, 1997, 149-62.

3(f) The unconscious

The uninterrupted thinking of the undescended soul was described above in **3(e)**, Plotinus, 4.8 [6] 8 (1-11), as something of which we are not normally conscious. The unconscious is repeatedly defended by Plotinus. There is a prior knowledge that the intellect is active, perhaps because, as will be seen below under **4(a)**, intellect is inevitably self-thinking. But our own everyday consciousness of our mental processes only operates when *phantasia* or 'inner sense' or discursive reason supplies it. Plotinus 4.4 [28] 8 (9-16), translated here, is a very good account of the workings of attention. See further **4** below.

(1) Plotinus 4.8.8 (1-11), translated above as **3(e)** (1).

(2) Plotinus 1.4 [46] 10 (6-29)

It seems that apprehension (*antilêpsis*) exists and occurs when the thought turns back (*anakamptein*) and when that which is active in the soul because of its life is thrust back again (*apôsthênai palin*), so to speak, as happens in a mirror when the surface is smooth, clear and held still. In such cases when the mirror is there the image (*eidôlon*) occurs, but when it is not, or is not in the same condition, the object of which there might have been an image is still actually there. In the same way with the soul, when that part of us which acts like this, and in which the likenesses of the reason and the intellect are imaged, is peaceful, then they are envisaged and known as it were perceptually (*aisthêtôs*) alongside the prior knowledge (*protera gnôsis*) that the mind and the intellect are active. But when it is disrupted because the harmony of the body is upset, the intellect and the mind reason without an image; then thinking takes place without imagination (*phantasia*). Consequently something like this might be concluded, that thinking does take place accompanied by imagination, although thinking is not the same as imagination. One could find many worthy activities, both theoretical and practical, when we are either contemplating or acting, which we may not be conscious (*parakolouthein*) of although we are wide awake. For the person reading does not have to be conscious that he is reading, particularly when he is reading with great concentration; nor does the person acting bravely have to be aware that he is doing so and that he is acting in accordance with bravery in so far as he is acting; there are countless other such instances. In fact awareness is likely to take the edge off the very activities of which we are aware. BF

(3) Plotinus 4.3 [27] 30 (5-16)

Perhaps there might be a reception into the imagination (*phantastikon*) of the reason (*logos*) which is conscious (*parakolouthein*) of the intellect's thought content (*noêma*). For that thought content (*noêma*) has no parts, and remains hidden within without yet having proceeded (*proelthein*) forth as it were. But reason (*logos*) unfolds it and brings it from being a thought

content into the imagination (*phantastikon*) and displays the thought content as if in a mirror. And that is how there is apprehension (*antilêpsis*) and retention (*monê*) and memory of it. And that is why, even though the soul is always moved towards thinking (*noêsis*), our apprehension (*antilêpsis*) [of the thinking] is when it comes to be in the imagination. The thinking is one thing, and the apprehension of it another. We are always thinking, but we do not always apprehend it. And this is because what receives [the thinking] receives not only thinking but also, on its other side, perceiving. RRKS

(4) Plotinus 4.4 [28] 8 (9-16)

In the first place it is not necessary to store up in oneself all that one sees. For when the perception is of no significance or does not concern us at all personally, but is caused involuntarily by the differences in what is seen, then it is the visual faculty alone that is affected by this, and the soul receives nothing into itself, since the perception is of no use, either in meeting some need or in bringing some other benefit from the difference perceived. But when the soul's very activity is directed exclusively elsewhere, then it would not tolerate the memory of things over and done with, since it is not aware of any perception of them even when they are occurring. BF

(5) Plotinus 5.1 [10] 12 (5-14)

For not everything which is in the soul is immediately perceptible, but it reaches us when it reaches our sense perception. Whenever any part of the soul is active but does not communicate a share of that activity to the perceptive faculty, then it does not pervade the whole soul. So we do not yet cognise it, since we exist in conjunction with the perceptive faculty and are not just a part of the soul, but the whole of it. Furthermore each of the psychic faculties is always alive and always active according to its own special activity. But there is cognition only when communication and apprehension (*antilêpsis*) occur. Therefore if there is to be apprehension of things present in the way described, we must turn (*epistrephein*) the apprehending faculty inwards and make it concentrate its attention (*prosokhê*) there. BF

Reading

E.R. Dodds, 'Tradition and personal achievement in the philosophy of Plotinus', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 1960, 1-7.

H. Schwyzer, ' "Bewusst" und "Unbewusst" bei Plotin', *Entretiens* 5, Fondation Hardt, Geneva 1960.

Andrew Smith, 'Unconsciousness and quasi-consciousness in Plotinus', *Phronesis* 23, 1978, 292-301.

E.W. Warren, 'Consciousness in Plotinus', *Phronesis* 9, 1964, 83-97.

Although Proclus rejects Plotinus' undescended soul, he does think that our descended souls contain rational principles (*logoi*) which can be made conscious by 'projection' (e.g. Philoponus *in DA* 5,3-4). We breathe forth knowledge of these, and the conceptions (*ennoiai*) in us are pulsating, but we have drunk the waters of forgetfulness and are so in a sort of dream. This is a version of Plato's theory of recollection, for which see also **3(e)**(10), and for the ascription of recollection theory to Aristotle, **5(c)**.

(6) Proclus *in Alc. 1*, 189,4-8 Westerink

The reason is that when souls come down to birth, they are in their substance full of understanding, but they acquire forgetfulness (*lêthê*), as a result of being born. By possessing rational principles (*logoi*) of things, they have as it were pulsating conceptions (*ennoiai*) about them, but overcome by drinking the waters of forgetfulness, they are unable to articulate their conceptions and send them upwards into understanding. RRKS

(7) Proclus *in Alc. 1*, 192,1-4 Westerink

As Plato somewhere says [cf. *Statesman* 277D], we seem to know everything in a dream, but not to know the very same things wakefully. In their substance they have rational principles (*logoi*) and, as it were, breathe forth knowledge (*gnôseis*) of them, but do not have them in an actual state (*kat' energeian*), and actually projected (*kat' probolên*). RRKS

Reading

Carlos Steel, 'Breathing thought: Proclus on the innate knowledge of the soul', in John Cleary, ed., *The Perennial Tradition of Neoplatonism*, Leuven 1997, 293-309, at 297-9.

3(g) Aristotle's active, actual or productive intellect

This kind of intellect stands in contrast with the material or potential intellect and with the dispositional intellect. These three intellects correspond respectively to Aristotle's talk in *DA* 3.5 of *poiêtikon* and *energeia*, of *hulê* and *dunamei*, and of *hexis*. Aristotle's active, actual (*energeiai*) or productive intellect (*poiêtikos nous*) is introduced briefly and ambiguously by him, but played an enormous role in Western thought.

(1) Aristotle *DA* 3.5, 430a10-25

Since, as in every [branch of] nature, there is something [which is] the matter (*hulê*) for each kind [of object] (and this is what is potentially (*dunamei*) each of these objects), and something else which is the cause and the producer (*poiêtikon*), by producing all things [of that kind], as, e.g., happens with the [relevant] art in relation to its matter, these distinctions must necessarily obtain too [in the soul]. And one [type of] intellect (*nous*)

is such by becoming all things, and one by producing all things, as [being] a certain state (*hexis*), like light; for in a way light too makes potentially existing colours into actually (*energeiai*) [existing] colours. And this intellect is separable and unaffectable and unmixed, being actuality (*energeia*) in [its] essence (*ousia*). For that which produces is always more valuable than that which is affected [by the producing], and the source (*arkhê*) [is more valuable than] the matter. And actual knowledge is identical with [its] object, while potential knowledge is prior [in time] in the individual, though in general it is not even [prior] in time. But [the active intellect] does not think (*noein*) at one time and not at another. And when it is separated it is only what it really is, and this alone is immortal and eternal. But we do not remember, because this is unaffectable, whereas the affectable intellect (*pathêtikos nous*) is perishable – and without this nothing thinks. ARL

Aristotle's successor, Theophrastus, expresses puzzlement in Themistius' report, but seems to think there is a third intellect somehow mixed out of the productive and potential intellects.

(2) Themistius *in DA* 108,18-109,3, reporting Theophrastus, includes FHS&G 320A

And tackling the distinctions made by Aristotle about the productive intellect, 'It is necessary', he [Theophrastus] says, 'to look into that statement of ours that in every nature there is something like matter and potential, and something like a cause and productive, and that in every case the productive element is more valuable than the passive and the origin than the matter.' He accepts these points, but develops some difficulties: 'What are these two natures? And what again is what is subjected to or united with the productive? For the intellect is in a way a mixture out of the productive and the potential. If then the motive [intellect] is connate, it must have been so both at once and for ever: but if [it came] later, with what, and in what way, was its coming to be? Certainly it appears to be uncreated, if it is also indestructible. But since it is immanent, why does it not always [think]? Why are there forgetting and deception and falsehood? Perhaps through the mixture.'

[108, 28] From all of this it is clear that it is not a bad suggestion of ours that there is with them one intellect, on the one hand, that which is passive and perishable, which they also call common and inseparable from the body, and because of the mixture with this Theophrastus says forgetting and deception occur; and on the other hand another, that which is as it were composed of the potential and the actual, which they suppose to be not only separate from the body, but also imperishable and uncreated, and in one way these intellects were two natures, and in one way one; for what is from matter and form is one. But, as I said, explaining the views of the philosophers is a special kind of activity and thought, but this at least we can

perhaps readily affirm, that someone could get knowledge of Aristotle and Theophrastus very well from the passages we have brought together, and perhaps still more knowledge of Plato himself. FHS&G

Alexander in the following passage of *DA* holds that the active intellect is the first cause, i.e. God. Cf. the theory that the active intellect is the divine intellect, reported in Alexander(?) *Mantissa* ch. 2 (= *de Intellectu*) 113,2-12, translated below.

(3) Alexander *DA* 89,9-19

Moreover, if the intellect that is of this sort is the first cause, which is the cause and principle of being for all the rest, in this way too it will be productive (*poiêtikos*), in that it is the cause of being for all the objects of thought. And intellect of this sort is separate and unaffected and unmixed with anything else; all these [properties] it has because it is separate from matter. For it is separate and exists on its own for this reason. None of the forms that are in matter is separable, or only in thought, because separation from matter is their destruction. It is also free from being affected, because what is affected in all things is the matter and what underlies. Being free from being affected and not mixed with any matter it is also imperishable, being actuality and form apart from potentiality and matter. Aristotle has shown that this is what the first cause is like, [the first cause] which is also intellect in the strict sense. RWS

According to Alexander *DA*, there are three intellects (cf. also Alexander(?) *Mantissa* 107,21-34). We are born with a material intellect; the active intellect gives (*DA* 88,23-4; *Mantissa* 107,31-4; 111,29-32) the material intellect its proper disposition (*hexis*), so producing the dispositional intellect and enabling us to form concepts which we store (*apokeisthai*, *DA* 86,5) in the dispositional intellect. But there are different accounts in Alexander *DA* and in Alexander(?) *Mantissa* ch. 2 (= *de Intellectu*). According to *DA* 84,19-21; 85,20-86,6; 87,24-5, the material intellect can already separate concepts (*noêmata*) from enmattered objects presented in sense perception, although only the dispositional intellect, produced by active intellect, can deploy concepts in the absence of sense perception. In *Mantissa* 108,19-24, it is only active intellect that enables our material intellect to separate forms from matter, and it does so by constituting an example of matterless form to refer to (*anaphora*). Alexander(?) applies to active intellect the term from Aristotle *GA* 736b28, 'intellect from outside', which, unlike Philoponus, he takes to be a non-human intellect. Themistius and Philoponus give a role in concept formation to active intellect, but regard it as *human*. For Themistius, active (= productive) intellect turns into universal concepts the imprints derived from perception which are stored in potential intellect. Cf. also **5(b)**(6). The so-called 'Philoponus' makes active intellect inscribe imprints like the painter of Plato's *Philebus*, but Philoponus himself says that passive intellect, being the same as imagination, possesses within itself the imprints it derives from perceptible objects, **3(j)**(3) below; cf. **1(a)**(10).

(4) Alexander *DA* 82,19-83,2

Each of us, then, has the intellect called potential and material, as I have said, as soon as we come into being, whereas we acquire later those at the level of actuality (*kat' energeian*) and their dispositions (*hexeis*) on account of daily instruction, to which it becomes receptive due to the actuality, and [we acquire] that which can contemplate from the [actuality] of the things that can be contemplated. VC

(5) Alexander *DA* 88,23-4

And since there is a material intellect, there must also be a productive (*poiêtikos*) intellect, which is the cause of the disposition of the material intellect. This will be the form which is intelligible in the strict sense and most [of all], and that is the [form] which is separate from matter. RWS

(6) Alexander(?) *Mantissa* 111,29-32

This, being intelligible by its own nature, comes to be in the one who thinks it; it is intellect that has come to be in the one who thinks, and it is thought 'from outside' and [is] immortal, and implants in the material [intellect] a disposition such that it thinks the things that are intelligible potentially. RWS

(7) Alexander(?) *Mantissa* 107,21-34

Another [type of intellect] is that which is already intelligising and possesses the disposition of intelligising, and is able to grasp the forms of intelligible things by its own power, being analogous to those among craftsmen who possess the disposition [for their craft] and can perform the actions of the craft by themselves. The first [type of intellect] was not like these, but more like those who are able to take up the craft and *become* craftsmen. And this [second type of intellect] is the material intellect when it has already acquired the disposition and actual intellection. This sort of intellect is in those who are already more perfect and are intelligising. So this is the second [type of] intellect.

[107,29] The third [type of] intellect besides the two already mentioned is the productive (*poiêtikos*), on account of which the material [intellect] comes to have the disposition, this productive [intellect] being analogous, as Aristotle says, to light. For as light is the cause for colours that are potentially visible of their becoming actually visible, so this third [type of] intellect makes the potential and material intellect [become] intellect in actuality, by creating in it the disposition of intellection. RWS

(8) Alexander *DA* 85,20-86,6

The disposition (*hexis*) of this sort is produced in the intellect initially by a transition from the continuous activity over sense objects, with the intellect taking from the sense objects a sort of theoretical vision, as it were, of the universal. At first, the universal is called a thought (*noêma*) or concept (*ennoia*), but once it has grown and become complex and versatile, so that it can do this even without the rungs of perception, it is by that time intellect. For when through continuous activity it has acquired such a disposition as to be able thereafter to act through itself, then the intellect spoken of as a disposition comes into being. It is analogous to the knower who is between the so-called potential knower and the one who is active as regards knowledge, and who overtakes the potential knower as much as he is thought to fall short of the one who is active as regards knowledge. But when this disposition is active, it becomes the intellect in actuality (*kat' energeian*). For the dispositional intellect is in a way the thoughts (*noêmata*) that are stored (*apokeimena*), assembled and at rest. RRKS

(9) Alexander *DA* 87,24-5

Intellect makes the essence and the forms of composites intelligible to itself by separating (*khôrizein*) them from what accompanies their being. RRKS

(10) Alexander *DA* 84,19-21

For intellect makes even sense objects thinkable for itself by separating them from matter and contemplating what constitutes their being. RRKS

(11) Alexander(?) *Mantissa* 108,19-24

This thing that is both intelligible in its own nature and intellect in actuality (*kat' energeian*) is the cause of the material intellect's, by reference (*anaphora*) to such a form, separating (*khôrizein*) and imitating and intelligising each of the enmattered forms as well, and making it intelligible. It is the intellect said to be 'from outside', the active intellect, not being a part or power of our soul, but coming to be in us from outside, whenever we think it. RWS

(12) Themistius *in DA* 98,35-99,10

As light when supervening on potential sight and potential colours produces both actual sight and actual colours, so too this actual (*energeiai*) intellect advances the potential intellect, and not only makes it an actual intellect, but also constitutes its potential objects of thought as actual objects. These are the enmattered forms and universal concepts (*noêmata*) assembled from particular objects of perception. Up to this point the

potential intellect cannot distinguish between them, or make transitions from one to the other, or combine and divide them. Instead like a storehouse (*thesauros*) of concepts, or rather as their matter, it stores the imprints (*tupous*) from perception and imagination through the agency of memory. But when the productive (*poiêtikos*) intellect comes upon it and takes hold of this matter of thoughts, the potential intellect becomes one with it, and becomes able to make transitions [from one concept to another], and to combine and divide concepts, and to examine some on the basis of others. RBT

(13) 'Philoponus' *in DA 3* 538,4-10

It should be known, then, that actual intellect is said to make all things because it inscribes the imprints of all things in potential intellect. That is why Plato too likens it to a painter [*Philebus* 39B] and Aristotle straight off proposes that it is a painter [an interpretation of *DA* 3.4, 430a1; 3.5, 430a15-17]. For if potential intellect becomes all things, actual intellect makes all things. So this can belong to the human intellect. For it is not Intellect from outside that inscribes all things in potential intellect, but actual intellect in us. WC

On the different ways in which the dispositional intellect and the active intellect are self-aware, see **4(a)**.

According to *Mantissa* 108,23-4, translated just above, the active intellect is not in us all the time. How does it come, or cease, to be present in us? Alexander(?) *Mantissa* says it is by being thought (*Mantissa* 108,23-4, translated just above, and 113,18-24, translated as **7(a)** (5) below). But the *Mantissa* records a rival view that the active intellect is active everywhere and always, but when it uses our physically based blend as an instrument, then it is said to be our intellect and we think. On neither view does the active intellect need to move.

(14) Alexander(?) *Mantissa* 112,5-113,18

[112,5] He [the author of a rival view] wanted to show that the intellect is immortal, and to avoid the difficulties which they bring against the 'intellect from outside', which must necessarily change its place but cannot, if it is incorporeal, either be in place or change and be in different places at different times. So, following his own idea, he said things like the following about the intellect that was said to be in every mortal body. He said that intellect was in matter as one substance in another substance and actuality, and always performed its own activities. When, from the body that was blended (*krathen*), there comes to be fire or something like this as the result of the mixture (*mixis*), which can provide an instrument (*organon*) for this intellect, which is in this mixture (*migma*) – for it is in every body, and this too is a body – then this instrument is called potential intellect, a capacity supervening on (*ginesthai epi*) such and such a blend (*krasis*) of bodies as a suitable potentiality for receiving the intellect that is in actuality (*ener-*

geiai). When [the intellect that is in actuality] takes hold of this instrument, then it acts as through an instrument and in relation to matter and through matter, and then we are said to intelligise. For our intellect is composed of the potentiality, which is the instrument of the divine intellect which Aristotle calls intellect in potentiality, and of the actuality of that [divine intellect]. And if either of these is not present it is impossible for us to intelligise.

[112,21] For straight away, at the first sowing of the seed, *the intellect which is in actuality* is there, going through all things and being [there] in actuality, as also in any other body it might be. But when it is also active through *our* potentiality, then this is said to be *our* intellect and *we* intelligise; just as if someone thought of a craftsman who sometimes acts in accordance with his craft without instruments, and sometimes with instruments, when also his technical activity is in relation to the matter. In the same way the divine intellect, too, is always active – which is why it is in actuality – and it [is also active] through an instrument when, from the mixture (*sunkrisis*) of bodies and their satisfactory blending (*eukrasia*), an instrument of this sort comes to be. For then it is active with a certain activity involving matter, and this is *our* intellect. And it departs in the same way as it enters. It does not change to being somewhere else, but, since it is everywhere, it remains also in the body which is broken up as a result of its departure, [though] the *instrumental* [*intellect*] is destroyed; just as the craftsman who has cast away his instruments is still active then, but with an activity which is not concerned with matter or by means of instruments.

[113,2] So, he [the author of the rival view] said that if one is to suppose that intellect is divine and imperishable according to Aristotle at all, one must think [that it is so] in this way, and not otherwise. And, fitting the passage in the third book of [Aristotle's] *On the Soul* to this [theory], he said that both the 'disposition' (*hexis*) and the 'light' should be applied to this [intellect] that is everywhere. This intellect either organises things here [on earth] on its own, in respect of their relation to the heavenly bodies, and combines and separates them, so that it is itself the craftsman [producing] the intellect that is *potentially*, as well; or else [it organises things here] along with the orderly movement of the heavenly bodies. For it is by this that things here are chiefly produced, by the approaching and withdrawing of the sun; either they are produced by [the sun] and the intellect here [together], or else it is nature that is produced by these things [the heavenly bodies] and their movement, while it [nature] organises individual things along with intellect.

[113,12] It seems to me [i.e. Alexander(?)] to be an objection to this [theory] both that intellect, [though] it is divine, is in even the basest things, as the Stoics thought, and in general that there should be intellect and some sort of primary providence in things *here* – and indeed that providence over things here should [also] come about in accordance with their relation (*anaphora*) to the divine [heavenly bodies]; also that intelligising does not depend on us and is not *our* task, but as soon as we come

to be, there is naturally present in us both the composition of *the potential and instrumental* [*intellect*] and the activity brought about through *the* [*intellect*] *that is from outside.* RWS

Themistius distinguishes at least three intellects, if we ignore his anomalous 'common intellect'. They are the potential (*dunamei*), actual (*energeiai*) and productive (*poiêtikos*). Confusingly, the last is also called actual (*energeiai*), and the Latin text of Themistius used by Thomas Aquinas, uses cognate Latin words for the actual and productive intellects (*actu, activus*), while Thomas speaks of the agent intellect (*agens*). Themistius denies Alexander's view that the productive intellect is God, *in DA* 102,36-103,19. For Aristotle it is said to be me, 101,9-15, cf. 100,37-101,1, while for Themistius the actual intellect (= productive, 103,36-8) provides the essence of me, and the combination of potential and actual intellect is what he considers to be me, 100,16-22. These texts are translated below and in **Logic and Metaphysics 18(a)**. It is the productive intellect, 103,36, that is argued by Themistius, despite its immortality and humanness, to be unitary and therefore not a source of *individual* immortality. Themistius' grounds for its unitariness are the fact of human mutual understanding, 103,32-104,6; 104,14-23. Cf. Plotinus' appeal, 4.9 [8] 3 (1-16), to sympathy and magic, as evidence for unity at the lower level of soul. These texts are translated in **Logic and Metaphysics 17(e)** and, in the case of Plotinus, **17(d)**. The three intellects are said in 103,32-104,6 to illuminate each other in a metaphor echoing Plotinus' description of the three men who illuminate each other at 6.7 [38] 6 (10-19) translated in **Logic and Metaphysics 18(a)**. 'Philoponus' expresses the idea that the productive intellect is immortal only through the succession of individual thinkers, *in DA* 538,32-539,7, translated below (17).

Thomas Aquinas uses Themistius against Averroes' view that even the material intellect, though immortal, is unitary, so that there is no *individual* immortality for human intellects. Thomas says, *On the Unity of Intellect* § 120, Keeler, that Catholics interpret Themistius' productive intellect as God. This is a misinterpretation, but he seizes on Themistius' allowing a plurality of illuminated intellects, in support of the Christian belief in individual immortality for the human intellect.

(15) Themistius *in DA* 102,36-103,19

As for those who believe that the productive (*poiêtikos*) intellect is [actually] said by him to be the first god, why do they overlook the following [statement] in this very passage [Aristotle *DA* 3.5]? For having prefaced the text by saying that in the whole of nature there is one thing that is matter, and another that moves matter and perfects, he claims, 'It is necessary that these differences exist in the soul too [430a13-14]', and that while one intellect is like this 'by becoming all things', another is so 'by producing (*poiein*) all things [14-15]'. In fact he states that an intellect like this is 'in the soul [13]', and for the human soul is, as it were, an apportionment that is of the highest value. This is clear too from that statement [cf. 2.2, 413b24-7] that we cited just above: 'Concerning the contemplative (*theôrêtikos*) intellect nothing is yet clear, but this seems to be a distinct kind of soul, just as what is eternal [is distinct] from what is perishable.' Also where he says 'This alone is immortal and eternal [430a23]' he could

not be speaking with reference to the first god, for he posits not only this [god] as immortal and eternal, but also virtually all the capacities of the divine bodies for causing motion that he also chooses to enumerate in his systematic treatise, the *Metaphysics*. In the case of the human soul and its associated capacities, however, in defining [the productive intellect] alone as immortal he would be correct to say 'and this alone is immortal'. Indeed, on the basis of this same statement it can also be affirmed that he thinks that the productive intellect is either some [aspect] of us, or is [identical with] us. For it would be consistent of him to say 'This alone [is] immortal' as belonging to us, whereas to say without qualification 'This alone is immortal' would be inconsistent of him when he believes that many other things are immortal. RBT

(16) Themistius *in DA* 103,30-104,6

From what source will the potential intellect also come to think all objects, if the intellect that advances it to activity does not think all objects prior to it? Now [the solution is that] the intellect that illuminates (*ellampôn*) in a primary sense is one, while those that are illuminated (*ellampomenoi*) and illuminate (*ellampontes*) are, just like light, more than one. For while the sun is one, you could speak of light as in a sense divided among the organs of sight. That is why Aristotle introduced as a comparison not the sun but [its derivative] light, whereas Plato [introduced] the sun [itself], in that he makes it analogous to the good [*Republic* 502C-509C]. There is no need to be puzzled if we who are combined from the potential and the actual (*energeiai*) [intellects] are referred back to one productive (*poiêtikos*) intellect, and that what it is to be each of us is derived from that single [intellect]. Where otherwise do the notions that are shared (*koinai ennoiai*) come from? Where is the untaught and identical understanding of the primary definitions and primary axioms derived from? For we would not understand one another unless there were a single intellect that we all shared. And Plato's [statement at *Gorgias* 481C5-D1] is true, 'If there was not <experience (*pathos*)> that was identical, although individually different for different human beings, but instead any one of us was uniquely affected in comparison with other people, it would not be easy for that person to indicate to another how he was personally affected.' RBT

(17) Themistius *in DA* 100,26-32

So just as the animal and what it is to be an animal are distinct, and the latter comes from the soul of the animal, so too I and what it is to be me are distinct. Thus what it is to be me comes from the soul, yet from it not in its totality – not, that is, from the capacity for perception, which is matter for the imagination, nor again from the capacity for imagination, which is matter for the potential intellect, nor from the potential intellect, which is matter for the productive (*poiêtikos*) intellect. What it is to be me

therefore comes from the productive intellect alone, since this alone is form in a precise sense .... RBT

The views on active or productive intellect of Alexander, Marinus, Plotinus, Plutarch of Athens and himself are given by 'Philoponus'. Plutarch of Athens and 'Philoponus' think the active or productive intellect is human and descended. Marinus thinks it an angelic or daemonic being, Plotinus an undescended soul, Alexander God. The arguments pro begin at 535,20, con at 536,5. At 538,32 'Philoponus' has most trouble with explaining why Aristotle should say of the *human* intellect that it always thinks. He is inclined to say that this depends on a *succession* of human thinkers (cf. Averroes). He finishes at 539,10 with a reference to the practice in Neoplatonist commentaries of discussing first the doctrine and then the text commented on. The *in de Intellectu* of Philoponus agrees that Aristotle's intellect in actuality is human.

(18) 'Philoponus' *in DA 3*, 535,4-539,12

[Survey of views] Alexander calls 'actual intellect' (*energeiai nous*) the one source of all things, the Intellect from outside. Marinus says that actual intellect is not the one source of things but some daemonic or angelic being. But in a word, at least, he says that actual intellect is neither ours nor that of the one source of all things. Plotinus thinks that actual intellect is human intellect, which comprises what is always acting and what sometimes acts. For Plotinus goes astray from Plato; hearing from (*akouein ek*) him that soul is always in motion, he thinks he calls it this because it always thinks, and on this account he believes that there is an intellect that is always thinking. So Plotinus says that what he [Aristotle] calls 'actual (*energeiai*) intellect' is human intellect that thinks always. Plutarch, however, and this is our position too, does not think that intellect in us is of two kinds but simple, and this simple intellect, he says, is not always thinking but thinks sometimes. Plutarch, then, believes that by 'actual intellect' he means human intellect, which he also believes to think sometimes. That is how many opinions have arisen about actual intellect. They are four in number, those of Alexander, Marinus, Plotinus and Plutarch, and each of them has something to plead in its favour. So it is right to set out the pleas for each opinion.

[535,20] [Their grounds] Alexander says that actual intellect is the First Cause. He goes astray from hearing him [Aristotle] say that it makes all things. Who is it that makes all things, if not the First Cause? So if Aristotle says that actual intellect makes all things, clearly by 'actual intellect' he means the First Cause. And again, because he says that actual intellect has its activity concurrent with its substance, which is peculiar only to God – for our intellect plainly brings about its activity through a power. And again because it always acts.

[535,27] Alexander's error starts here and he says that these things fit no one but God alone. It is a peculiarity of God alone to have activity concurrent with substance and to act always. Plotinus was misled by its

always acting and supposed an intellect in us that is always acting and calls this 'actual intellect'. Marinus used the arguments of both and said that it is a daemonic intellect that Aristotle calls 'actual intellect'. It is not human because he says it thinks all things and acts by its substance and thinks always. But neither is it the Intellect from outside. For if he says that it is analogous to light and a disposition and that it acts with imagination and forgets, these things do not belong to the Intellect from outside. His saying it is analogous to light and a disposition shows that these things are proper to an intellect that is between Intellect from outside and human intellect, a sort of angelic intellect. For light is intermediate between that which illuminates and that which is illuminated, and a disposition is intermediate between [mere] suitability and having to hand. He likens the intellect to these, so clearly he is speaking of a kind of intellect intermediate between the human and that which is from outside. But Plutarch pleads that the treatise is about the soul and Aristotle has no business now to discuss the Intellect which is from outside. It is human intellect that he calls 'actual intellect', because that is what the treatise he has undertaken is about.

[536,5] [Objections] This leaves open an attack on the three of them, I mean Alexander, Marinus and Plotinus, arising from the text. For we find Aristotle saying that actual intellect is the same in subject but different in time in being potential and actual. For having formerly been in potentiality it comes later to be in actuality. If Aristotle, then, says this in the text, clearly by 'actual intellect' he does not mean God, as Alexander thinks. For God is not formerly in potentiality but always in actuality, being the spring of goodness. And neither is a daemonic or angelic intellect formerly in potentiality – for Aristotle wants these intellects to be actual. So Marinus too speaks ill. But there is something contrary to Plotinus as well. For according to him it acts always, and if so, it was not formerly in potentiality. But Aristotle says it was formerly in potentiality. It has clearly emerged, then, through this that he is not referring either to God or to an intellect that is daemonic or angelic, or to any intellect that acts always, but the discussion is about the intellect that is in us.

[536,19] [Objections, contd] That is the first attack. The second is this. Why does Aristotle say that intellect alone is immortal and eternal? For he says this too: 'It alone is immortal and eternal [430a23]'. For if we are thinking of the First Cause, it is not the case that it alone is immortal (for there are other things that are immortal), and again if we are thinking of that which is angelic or daemonic, it is not the case that it alone is immortal (for the First Cause is immortal too); and again if we are thinking of the intellect which according to Plotinus is always thinking, neither is that alone immortal. For there are also other things that are immortal, such as intellects that think sometimes. For it is not only intellects which think always that are immortal; so, according to Plotinus, are intellects which think sometimes. So this too is a common attack on them, that they cannot find what intellect it is of which he says that it alone is immortal.

[536,29] But those who say that the human intellect thinks sometimes, and this is the only intellect there is, and we do not have another, are able to make a defence and say this: that there are many things that go to make up a human being, and of these intellect alone is immortal and eternal. We must reason that 'alone' is said relatively to the things that make up the human being. But Plotinus cannot give this defence. He supposes two intellects, that which thinks always and that which thinks sometimes. Which, then, can he call 'alone immortal'? If that which thinks always, he speaks falsely. For that which thinks sometimes is immortal too. And if he says that that which thinks sometimes is immortal, so, according to him, is that which thinks always. So Plotinus is not able to say how we can call intellect 'alone immortal'.

[537,1] He [Aristotle] does well to add that intellect is 'immortal and eternal'. For the non-rational soul also and the vegetable soul are immortal, but they are not eternal. For they bring along life, and nothing receives the contrary of what it brings along, so it follows that if they have life they are also immortal [cf. Plato *Phaedo* 105]. They are not, however, eternal. A thing is called 'eternal' for always having being, but 'immortal' for always living. So intellect alone of the things in us both always has being and always is living; the non-rational soul and the vegetable are always alive but do not always have being. So this belongs to the human intellect alone. These attacks apply commonly to all three.

[537,9] Against Alexander and Marinus we have this to say, that in the text he calls intellect 'separable', not 'separated'. The First Cause, which Alexander says, and the daemonic, which Marinus says, is actual intellect, are separated, not separable. 'Separable' signifies 'not yet separated, but capable of being separated'. They are already separated, both the First Cause and the daemonic or angelic intellect, not only in account but also in substance, that is, in subject. So we have an attack from the text that it says that actual intellect is separable and not separated.

[537,17] And there is another attack from his calling the actual intellect 'psychical'. For neither is the First Cause psychical, Alexander, neither is a daemonic being, Marinus. So we cannot think that actual intellect is either a daemonic being or the First Cause, but only that intellect in us which sometimes acts, the human one. Neither the First Cause nor a daemonic being acts with imagination, but only the intellect that is in us. That is a common attack on Alexander and Marinus.

[537,25] Against Alexander on his own we may say this. How can we think that by 'actual intellect' he means the First Cause, if he likens it to light and to a disposition? The First Cause is a substance, not a disposition, and brings forth substances, and is analogous not at all to light but to the Sun itself. So this too fits that intellect which is present in us. And again Aristotle says that just as light does not produce colours, but makes plain colours that are already there, so too intellect seems to produce all things by making them plain. But it is absurd to say this of the First Cause. The First Cause brings forth the substance of things that are, and there is

nothing that it has not made. And again, Alexander, he calls it a 'disposition', and a disposition is that which is in potentiality in the second way [cf. Aristotle *DA* 2.5, 417a22-8]. The First Cause is not in potentiality in any way. Again, Aristotle says of it that it is the same in subject but different in time in being potential and actual. The First Cause in no way has anything prior to itself either in potentiality or in actuality. Besides, he says that intellect forgets. How can that belong to Intellect from outside? It is the intellect in us that forgets through being impeded by its relation to the body. All the things, then, which Aristotle says fit actual intellect [show that] his discussion is about the human intellect that is brought from potentiality to actuality.

[538,2] [The case for the actual intellect] This will be demonstrated if we show that the things which seem not to belong to it, I mean making all things, acting by its substance and thinking always, do belong to it. It should be known, then, that actual intellect is said to produce all things because it inscribes the imprints of all things in potential intellect. That is why Plato too likens it to a painter [*Philebus* 39B] and Aristotle straight off proposes that it is a painter [cf. *DA* 430a1; a15-17]. For if potential intellect becomes all things, actual intellect makes all things. So this can belong to the human intellect. For it is not Intellect from outside that inscribes all things in potential intellect, but actual intellect in us.

[538,10] And the other gobbet fits it too, the one saying it acts by its substance. To understand this we must first go back a little. The knower is neither the soul alone nor knowledge alone but a mixture of both. The knower consists of soul and knowledge. And soul is analogous to matter, knowledge to form. And since, as we have come to know in the *Physics* [2.1, 193b6], the form of everything is substance more than the matter, knowledge is the substance of the knower, and the knower acts by virtue of knowledge, which has been shown to be the knower's substance. It follows, then, that it is by virtue of this that it is said to act by its substance, because knowledge is the substance of the knower. It is not by virtue of that lofty and exalted speculation that, as with God, its substance is the same as its activity – for with souls and other substances apart from the First Cause there is substance and power and activity. It is said to act by its substance because knowledge is said to be, as it were, the substance of soul. He gives intellect its name, then, from what is better. For since intellect acts by its activity, and it acts when it is in actuality, and in all things what is actuality and substance is better, for this reason, meaning to say that it acts by its activity he says it does so by its substance, that being what is better. In the same way we often indicate the whole by one [part] which is superior as in 'Teucer, dear head [Homer, *Iliad* 8.281]'. This too, then, fits the actual intellect of the human being. For it thinks when it is in actuality. But intellect from outside is activity straight off. That he is using 'substance' because of its superiority is clear from his saying: 'That this is so is clear. For the agent is superior to the patient and the source to the matter.' So he uses 'substance' because it is superior.

[538,32] And the third thing fits it, that intellect always thinks. Not, as Plotinus believes, because the same intellect thinks always throughout everything, for we are not saying that the intellect which thinks always is one in number; but because in the whole cosmos there is always a human intellect thinking. Even if I am not thinking, still, someone else is, and 'always' applies by succession, so that God's irradiation may never cease to shine on us. For if we did not think always, but at times we did not think, it would cease. If this is how we say it always thinks, this belongs to human intellect. That it thinks always we apply not to one intellect in number but to all, just as we say that man lives always, not because of Socrates but because there is some man always living. Or else [we may say] that it is said always to think because it is always capable of thinking. The person who has intellect thinks at whatever hour he wishes. So this belongs to human intellect. For Intellect from outside is the one intellect in number that thinks all things. So much is said to outline the doctrine (*theôria*). But it is our task to indicate the ten points in the text and fill them out. That is the doctrine. WC

(19) Philoponus *in de Intellectu* p. 45 Verbeke (*CLCAG*) *ms.* lines 53-9

In addition to these opinions there is a fourth which is true: that he is speaking of a human intellect which is identical with that which is in potentiality. For when the intellect which is in potentiality is perfected, it comes to be in actuality. Hence that which is in potentiality and that which is in actuality are one and the same in essence, and differ in being perfect and imperfect. That Aristotle's remarks about the intellect in actuality do not fit either the productive intellect or, in a word, any other intellect which is external to the human soul, is clear from those remarks themselves. WC

The author of 'Simplicius' *in DA*, who has been argued by Carlos Steel to be Priscian, thinks that the active intellect is our rational souls. He doesn't want to disagree with Iamblichus, who, however, seems to have taken active intellect to be above our souls. Priscian's view in the *Metaphrasis* is less clear.

(20) 'Simplicius' *in DA* 220,25-38

But intellect, they say, is a substance superior to soul, and Aristotle is talking about intellect and not about rational substance. And how, if the treatise is about the soul, is the best faculty of the soul, the rational one, left aside? How, when he begins with the lowest faculty, the nutritive one, and goes up through the adjacent ones, through the sensitive faculty and the imaginative one, does he not deal with rational cognition, going up in good order, as appears when he first gives the imperfect and potential one that depends on the first, then the one that is perfect in disposition (*hexis*), and so the one that is in accordance with the static activity that goes with its substance, does he go above all the rational soul and philosophise about

the transcendent intellect of the soul which was not the subject of the discourse? Surely it is clearly stated that what is now before us for consideration, that with which it was said to think, is a part of the soul. Wisdom is a rational kind of cognition, but does not belong to the intellect above the soul. And again he makes the point. 'I mean the intellect which thinks discursively and apprehends [Aristotle *DA* 3.4, 429a23]'. Apprehending and thinking discursively are rational forms of cognition. HJB

(21) 'Simplicius' *in DA* 240,4-24

I make the first point because the whole treatise [Aristotle *DA* 3.4ff.] is about the rational soul, the second because he himself [Aristotle] clearly adds 'these differences obtain too in the soul [Aristotle *DA* 3.5, 430a13-14, translated above in **3(g)**]'. We shall adduce all the things said after this which do not go beyond the consideration of the soul. So, keeping to what has previously been said, after the secondary intellect which he has already talked about, the one which departs from the predominant substance of soul and therefore from the activity that goes with it, and proceeds to secondary lives and contemplations, be they imperfect or perfect, but perfect in projection (*probolê*) and being perfected as by something else by the forms that remain in the first kind of being, he now investigates the intellect that exists by the same substantial activity and thinks the forms, not the ones that proceed but those which remain in the substance of the soul itself. For the inclination (*rhopê*) to the outside is brought down to a sort of division (for the being outside is precisely this, some kind of division) and proceeds to a secondary life in the soul, which is not what the first is, and divides up the activity of the substance, not only of the first but also of the activity that has been projected (*proballesthai*), so that the activity is no longer substance, but merely in contact with substance, just as the soul's ascent to its own highest substance and its remaining in it unifies the activity with the substance because of the complete turning inside. The 'inside' shows the indivisible bringing together. But the summit of the soul is immediately joined with the intellective substance above it and the forms in it. For all intellective substance above the soul is indivisible. Hence the activity is what the substance is and the substance is activity not, clearly, in its specific nature but because the two are brought together indivisibly to be one. HJB

(22) Iamblichus *ap.* 'Simplicium' *in DA* 313,1-6

We must enquire how we are to agree with the divine Iamblichus who understands both potential intellect and actual to refer to what is superior to the soul, either to what defines it or to what is not shared by it, whereas we think that both are allocated to the very substance of the soul, as we have said in commenting from Aristotle's words themselves in many places. WC

(23) Priscian *Metaphrasis in Theophrastum* 26,5-7

We must therefore take the 'potentially' also analogically, with regard to the intellect that is connected with the soul (*psukhikos nous*); for [it must be interpreted] in relation to the intellect in actuality, that is, that which is separate. PH

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3(h) How distinct is intellect from soul?

We have seen in **3(g)** that Alexander and Iamblichus understood Aristotle's active intellect as completely distinct from the human soul, while a majority, Themistius, Plutarch of Athens, Philoponus and the authors of 'Philoponus' *in DA 3* and 'Simplicius' *in DA*, saw it as part of the human soul. There was a parallel disagreement about intellect outside the context of Aristotle's active intellect. Plotinus, as Blumenthal points out, does not always sharply distinguish soul from intellect. His pupil Porphyry is accused by Iamblichus either of making Soul ('all such substance') homogeneous with itself (so Festugière), as he does in other passages discussed in **11(d)**, or else of making Soul and Intellect ('all such substance') homogeneous with *each other* (so Steel). If the latter is his complaint, his objection will be that everything in the intelligible world will be not only in Intellect (as it should be), but also in soul, and in each particular soul or kind of soul. In that case, Soul will not differ from Intellect, at least as regards their common essence ('its universal essence').

If instead Iamblichus is repeating the familiar complaint, illustrated in **11(d)**, his objection will be that Porphyry, by making all souls rational, allows all particular souls to contain all intelligibles. In that case, Soul will not differ from Intellect, at least not in its total being (Michel Christiansen, oral communication on 'its universal essence'), but only partially.

On either interpretation, Iamblichus finishes by objecting that Porphyry does not sufficiently distinguish Intellect from Soul.

If Iamblichus' complaint is that Porphyry makes Soul homogeneous (*homoiomerês*) with *Intellect*, and he bases this, as d'Ancona suggests, on Porphyry *Sentences* 22, he may be unjustified. For there Porphyry talks only of Intellect (*nous*), and makes all intellective substance (*noera ousia*) to be homogeneous (*homoiomerês*). It is not so clear that he is speaking of souls.

(1) Porphyry *ap.* Iamblichum *DA ap.* Stobaeum 1,365,7-17

There are then some who represent all such substance as homogeneous (*homoiomerês*) and one and the same, so that the whole is in any part of it. They situate even in a particular soul the intelligible world and the gods and daemons and the good and all the kinds more eminent than [soul], and represent all things as being in all things alike, though in each according to its particular essence. ... Porphyry is in two minds about this view, sometimes eschewing it strongly, but sometimes following it as handed down from above. According to this view, soul does not differ at all, at least as regards its universal essence, from Intellect and the gods and the greater kinds. RRKS

(2) Porphyry *Sentences* 22, p. 13, 13-16 Lamberz

The intellective substance (*noera ousia*) is homogeneous (*homoiomerês*) so that beings are both in the particular intellect and in the universal Intellect, though in the universal Intellect even particulars are present in a universal way, and in the particular intellect even universals in a particular way. RRKS

Reading

Christina d'Ancona, 'Porphyry, universal soul and the Arabic Plotinus', *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy* 9, 1999, 47-88.

H.J. Blumenthal, '*Nous* and soul in Plotinus: some problems of demarcation', in *Plotino e il Neoplatonismo in Oriente e in Occidente*, Accademia dei Lincei, Rome 1974, 203-19.

A.-J. Festugière, *La Révélation d'Hermès Trismégiste*, Paris 1953, vol. 3, p. 184, notes 1 and 2.

Carlos Steel, *The Changing Self*, Brussels 1978, ch. 1, esp. p. 25.

3(i) Intelligibles in potential intellect with first, second or third potentiality

Philoponus discusses the status in the potential intellect of the forms of intelligibles. Referring to Aristotle's distinction in *DA* 2.5 of two levels of potentiality, that of the infant who may become a geometer, and that of the geometer inactivated by sleep, Philoponus asks whether the forms are present as a first potentiality. He cites Alexander's discussion of material intellect, but rejects his view that it is formless.

(1) Philoponus *in de Intellectu* pp. 36-7 Verbeke (*CLCAG*), *ms.* lines 70-80

He likens it [i.e. intellect] to a tablet which has nothing written on it. Just as on an uninscribed sheet all those things which can be written on it are present in potentiality, on account of its suitability, but none of the things to be written is present in actuality before it is written, so too, the intellect, he says, is no intelligible thing in actuality, but all in potentiality. And just as something you write on when it is inscribed becomes a thing you write on in actuality, yet the form the sheet had before is not destroyed, so too the intellect when it becomes the things understood in actuality is in no way changed from its proper nature. If, in changing from potentiality to actuality, the intellect were affected to some extent and subverted from its proper nature, there would be occasion to feel a problem. But as it is, being likened to an uninscribed thing you write on, plainly it continues unaffected. WC

(2) 'Philoponus' *in DA 3*, 519,27-37, reporting Alexander

Intellect, then [according to Alexander on material intellect], is matter and does not have form, lest being muddied by form it should incline to the

cognition of its own form and should not know forms contrary to it. For as the transparent is colourless so that it may serve to carry colours impartially, in the same way intellect, he says, is formless that it may know all forms. So says Alexander, altogether erroneously. For if it is formless for this reason, that it may know all things that are, he should extend the argument: it ought not to be anywhere in any way whatever. For it also knows what in no way is. And we refute Alexander not only in this way but from Aristotle himself. Aristotle himself says that intellect is the form of forms [*DA* 3.8, 432a2]. That is the error peculiar to Alexander, that he says intellect is formless. For he says that its substance is potential in children, and what is potential is formless. WC

Or are they present as a second potentiality, i.e. as a first actuality? Iamblichus tries to present Aristotle as accepting Plato's theory of concepts in the intellect recollected from a previous life. These concepts would exist at the level of second potentiality. Philoponus at **5(c)**(2) below also ascribes to Aristotle a version of the idea of pre-nate knowledge.

(3) Iamblichus *ap.* 'Philoponum' *in DA 3*, 533,25-35

Iamblichus says: 'And see that he says "writing tablet [Aristotle *DA* 3.4, 430a1]" and not "sheet of papyrus". For it is not called a "writing tablet" if it does not have written letters on it. He says this meaning that the souls of children, which are potential intellect, have the accounts of things. So if he likens it to a writing tablet, clearly it has accounts of things, just as the writing tablet has written letters. If he calls it "on which nothing is written", it stands for "ill written" because it has faint, non-evident written letters, as also we say of a tragic actor with a bad voice "He has no voice". So Aristotle too (says he), like Plato, is of the opinion that objects of intellect are in the soul and accounts of all things, and that there is recollection, not learning.' He says this to show that Aristotle too is of the same opinion as he. WC

(4) Proclus *in Parm.* 892,20-8

It is this that the Peripatetics have in their heads when they go on about the 'later-born' form, which is meant to be quite different from the reason-principle in soul; by 'reason-principle in soul' I mean that which resides essentially in souls, from contemplating which we say that the soul is the totality of the Forms, and that the Soul is the place of the Forms, these being present in it not only potentially, in Aristotle's words [*DA* 3.4, 429a27ff.] but in actuality, according to the first meaning of actuality, as he defines it [*DA* 2.5, 417a22ff.]. GM, JD

(5) Proclus *in Eucl. 1*, 16,8-10

The soul therefore was never a writing tablet that was empty even of

words, but one that has been written on always and is writing on itself and being written on by intellect. RRKS

Or are they present as some third kind of potentiality, like that of a geometer active, but impeded by drink? See further under **5**.

(6) Philoponus *in de Intellectu* p. 39 Verbeke (*CLCAG*) *ms.* lines 1-20

If we have shown a thousand times over, quoting Aristotelian texts, that he wants the rational soul to be separate and immortal, it is plain that even if he here likens it to an uninscribed thing we write on, he does not mean that it has forms in potentiality in the first sense (the sense in which semen is a man in potentiality). But a certain latitude (*platos*) must be recognised in both meanings of 'potentiality'. For we say that prime matter is in potentiality a man, and also the elements and semen and all the things which are in potentiality in the first sense, that is, by virtue of suitability; but they are not in potentiality in the same way but some are closer to the thing and some more remote. A similar latitude (*latitudo*), then, must be recognised in connection with potentiality in the second sense, i.e. by way of disposition. Both the sleeping geometer and the one who is awake are said to be [one who knows] in potentiality, but the waking geometer is closer to the actuality; and the geometer who is asleep or drunk because he is held down by sleep or intoxication, resembles the man who does not have the disposition at all. So in the same way even if he says the soul resembles an uninscribed thing you write on [Aristotle *DA* 3.4, 430a1], he calls it this because of the holding down of cognition by the passions which makes it seem as if it did not have forms at all. And when it has already become a knower he still calls it 'in potentiality'. For he says: 'When it becomes particular things as one who knows in actuality is said to [even then it is in potentiality in a way] [Aristotle *DA* 3.4, 429b5-7]. WC

Reading

Frans de Haas, 'Recollection and potentiality in Philoponus', in Kardaus, Spruyt, eds, *The Winged Chariot*, Leiden 1999.

3(j) Passive intellect as *phantasia*

The passive intellect is identified with *phantasia* by some, even though Aristotle distinguishes *phantasia* as a perceptual faculty. Passive intellect is too passive to be real intellect, according to Proclus. But Themistius had already (**3(g)**(12); see also **5(b)**) connected potential intellect with *phantasia* as a storehouse of imprints that can be turned into concepts. And Philoponus at **3(j)**(3) says that passive intellect, being the same as imagination, takes imprints from perceptible objects and possesses them *within itself*.

(1) Philoponus *in de Intellectu* p. 13 Verbeke (*CLCAG*) *ms.* lines 00-6

Why does he say 'That which is called the "intellect" of the soul [Aristotle *DA* 3.4, 429a22]?' Either to distinguish it from the imagination, as I said just now. For imagination is not strictly speaking intellect; it is not intellect without an added qualification; with an added qualification it is called 'passive intellect [cf. 3.5, 430a19]' – which is as much as to say, it is not intellect at all. For added qualifications, as we have said more than once, destroy the original sense. Or alternatively [he says it] to differentiate it from the intellect in actuality – I mean the contemplative intellect – for that is what is primarily and above all intellect. WC

(2) 'Philoponus' *in DA 3*, 523,29-31

Since imagination too is called 'passive intellect' he says that our present discussion is not about that, but about that intellect in virtue of which we exercise discursive thought (*dianoeisthai*) and supposition (*hupolambanein*). WC

(3) Philoponus *in DA* 5,38-6,4; 11,7-11

Imagination (*phantasia*), taking from sense-perception the imprints of perceptible objects, moulds these within itself. Hence Aristotle also calls it [imagination] the passive intellect – intellect, inasmuch as it [i.e. imagination] possesses what it knows within itself and apprehends this as does the intellect, by direct intuition (*haplê prosbolê*) and not by argument; passive, because it knows by means of imprints (*tupoi*) and not without figures.

Clearly, therefore, in these passages [*DA* 3.5] he says that the intellect is impassible, immortal and eternal and separable in itself, whereas the imagination, which he called the passive intellect – intellect, on the one hand, because it possesses within itself what it knows; passive, on the other hand, because due to imprints – is perishable. JDud, KV

(4) Proclus *in Eucl. 1*, 51,20-52,20

Imagination (*phantasia*), by virtue of its formative movement and by having its existence along with and in the body, produces impressions that are always particularised and divided and possess shape, and everything it cognises has this kind of existence. That is why someone has not shrunk from calling it passive intellect. Yet if it is intellect, how could it be other than impassive and immaterial? But if its activity is accompanied by being affected (*pathos*), how could it be rightly called intellect any longer? Indeed, impassivity is the hallmark of intellect and the intellective nature, whereas the possibility of being affected is far removed from a being like that. But in my view he wanted to emphasise its intermediate position between the highest and the lowest types of knowledge, and therefore he

called it both 'intellect', because of its resemblance with the highest, and 'passive' because of its kinship with the lowest. For, on the one hand, cognitions that are without any shape or form contain the objects of intellection within themselves and their activity is self-directed [i.e. directed towards themselves]. They are one with the objects of their cognition and free of any impression or affect (*pathos*) reaching them from the outside. The lowest types of cognition, on the other hand, work through the sense organs, and they are more like affects (*pathêmata*), receiving their information [i.e. knowledge and opinions] from the outside and moving passively along with their objects. Such are sense perceptions, which 'arise out of violent affects (*pathêmata*)', as Plato says [*Tim.* 42A]. JO

(5) Asclepius *in Metaph.* 280,14-17

It is not true that imagination (*phantasia*) is the same as sense perception, since sense perception needs external things for its activity, whereas imagination does not. That is why Aristotle in his work *On the Soul* calls the latter 'passive intellect'. JO

(6) 'Simplicius' *in DA* 248,6-10

The impassive intellect thinks none of the things that can clearly be remembered, which is what Aristotle is talking about. Those things, as he himself teaches elsewhere [*Mem.* 450a23-5], are things in the imagination (*phantasta*). Therefore in thinking about things that can be remembered we do certainly need the reason [i.e. passive intellect] that proceeds as far as the imagination, and without this not even the impassive intellect will think any of the things that can be remembered. HJB

Reading

O. Ballériaux, 'Thémistius et le Néoplatonisme: le *nous pathêtikos* et l'immortalité de l'âme', *Revue de la philosophie ancienne* 12, 1994, 171-200.

H.J. Blumenthal, '*Nous pathêtikos* in later Greek philosophy', *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, supp. vol. 1991, 191-205.

H.J. Blumenthal, *Aristotle and Neoplatonism in Late Antiquity*, London 1996, 157-63.

Cf. F.M. Schroeder, 'The potential or material intellect and the authorship of the *de Intellectu*', *Symbolae Osloenses*, 1982, 115-25.

3(k) Identity of intellect with its objects

A qualified identity is asserted by Aristotle on the basis of a general causal principle in *Physics* 3.3, that the act of teaching and the act of learning, though not having all properties in common, are to be counted, if one is counting, as one activity, not two, even though 'teaching' and 'learning' do not mean the same thing. This identity is sometimes called *numerical* identity and it is applied to the acts of agent and patient quite generally, to the acts of perceptible and perceiver in *DA* 3.2, and to the acts of intelligible and intellect in *DA* 3.4; 3.7; 3.8. When the patient is a thinker,

he will not, if enmattered, be identical with the object of thought; only his act of thinking will be so identical. But in the case of matterless intellects, the divine ones, the identity applies to thinker, as well as to activity of thinking, since a matterless intellect consists of nothing but its activity of thinking. Alexander, Plotinus, and Philoponus assert the same identity of intellect with object of thought. This view is not yet in Plato.

In Plotinus the thesis of identity between intellect and intelligible may seem to be qualified by his realist inclination, which makes the Platonic Forms prior to Intellect. But Aristotle himself is committed to combining identity with priority in this sort of context. For the act of teaching is causally prior to the act of learning with which it is identical in *Physics* 3.3, and the act of the perceptibles is causally prior to the act of perceiving with which it is identical in *DA* 3.2. The identity thesis is then applied to intelligibles and intellect, as if this were a parallel case. All this is explained more fully in **Logic and Metaphysics 15(c)**.

There is an ambiguity in the notion of *objects* of intellect. Aristotle says in *DA* 3.8 that the object with which thought is identical is not e.g. stone, but the form of stone. On the other hand, it is presumably stone, not the form of stone, *of* which I think that it is hard. That is one reason why in many of the translations there is talk of thinking forms, or objects, or intelligibles, rather than *of* forms, objects, or intelligibles. This translation was recommended by A.C. Lloyd.

(1) Aristotle *DA* 3.8, 431b20-432a3

And now, summing up what was said about the soul, let us say again that the soul is in a way all things; for they are either perceptible or intelligible (*noêtos*), and knowledge (*epistêmê*) is in a way the intelligible ones, while perception is the perceptible ones – but how this [is so] we must inquire. So knowledge and perception are divided in line with things themselves, the potential in line with the potential, and the actual in line with the actual; and the perceptive and cognitive [faculties] of the soul are potentially these [objects], the one being [the] knowable and the other [the] perceptible; [they are] necessarily either [the objects] themselves or [their] forms – but not [the objects] themselves, for not [e.g.] the stone but rather [its] form is in the soul. So the soul is like the hand, for the hand is a tool of tools, and the intellect (*nous*) is a form of forms and perception is a form of perceptibles. ARL

(2) Aristotle *DA* 3.2, 425b26-426a26

The actuality of what is perceived and of perception is one and the same but their being is not the same. I mean, e.g., actual sound and actual hearing; for it is possible to have [the faculty of] hearing without [actually] hearing, and what has [the capacity to make a] sound is not always sounding, but when what can hear is actually doing so, and what can sound is sounding, then actual hearing (*akoê*) occurs at the same time as the actual sound and one could call one of them [the act of] hearing (*akousis*) and the other sounding. If moreover change (both the action (*poiêsis*) and its result (*pathos*)) are in the thing acted on, the sound and the actual

hearing (*akoê*) must be in the potential [hearing]. For the actualisation of the agent (*poiêtikos*) and of change occurs in what is changed, which is why what is [actively] changing [i.e. causing change], need not be changed. Now the actualisation of the sounder is sound or sounding, and that of the hearer is hearing (*akoê*) or audition (*akousis*); for hearing (*akoê*) has a double sense, and so does sound.

[426a8] And the same story (*logos*) holds for the other senses (*aisthêseis*) and sensibles. For as acting and being acted on both occur in what is acted on and not in what acts, so the actualisation both of the perceived and of the perceiver [occurs] in the perceiver. But in some cases it has a name, as with 'sounding' and 'audition', while in others one term has no name; for the actuality of sight is called 'seeing' but that of colour has no name, and that of [the faculty of] taste [is called] 'tasting', but that of flavour has no name. And since the actuality of the perceived and of the perceiver is one, though their being is different, what is in this way called hearing (*akoê*) and sound must perish or be preserved together, and [so must] flavour and tasting, and similarly in the other cases; but [this is] not necessary with things spoken of potentially. But the earlier philosophers of nature (*phusiologoi*) did not speak well here, thinking nothing was white or black without sight, nor a flavour without tasting, for they spoke rightly in one way but not rightly in another. For since 'perception' and 'perceived' are said in two ways, in some cases in potentiality and in others in actuality, what they said holds of the latter cases but not of the former. But they spoke in a simple way (*haplôs*) of things which are not spoken of in a simple way. ARL

(3) Alexander *DA* 87,29-88,10

But what is intelligible in actuality is the same as intellect in actuality (*kat' energeian*), if what is thought is the same as that which thinks it. So form without matter is intellect in the proper sense and in actuality. And the person who thinks this thinks an intellect that does not become intellect when it is thought, as is the case with forms which are in matter, but is intellect even without being thought by intellect. If then the intellect which thinks in thinking becomes what it thinks, the intellect in us too, that is the dispositional (*kath' hexin*) intellect, when it thinks these forms then becomes the same as them. For they come to be, in the one who thinks them, of the same sort as they are in their own subsistence and apart from being thought; for such things are simple. So that the intellect that thinks them comes to be the same as them, when it thinks [them]. In these cases both what thinks and what is thought are intellect, and at that time both are the same thing. RWS

(4) Alexander *DA* 90,2-4

Therefore, in the case of forms that are in matter, as I said, whenever such

forms are not being thought, none of them is intellect, if it is in their being thought that their being intelligibles has its existence. RWS

(5) Alexander *DA* 84,21-4

The material intellect is then, none of the things in actuality, but all in potentiality. For before thinking it is nothing in actuality, but when it thinks something, it comes to be what is being thought, at least if thinking for it consists in its possessing the form that is being thought. RRKS

See also Alexander(?) *Mantissa* 108,7-9 and 16-19 (not translated); and see under **4(a)** below, *Mantissa* 109,23-110,3.

(6) Plotinus 3.9 [13] 1 (12-14; 15-16; 20)

So far as what is being said, nothing prevents the two being one, though divided in thought, if only as being the one intelligible, the other intelligising. ... Or nothing prevents the intelligible also being an intellect. ... By thinking it, it is itself both intellect and intelligible. RRKS

(7) Plotinus 1.8 [51] 2 (15-17)

This [superior] intellect is not like that [lower intellect], but it has everything and is everything and it is together with them being together with itself [reading *hautôi*] and has all things without having them. For it is not something different from them. JO

(8) Plotinus 5.1 [10] 4 (21-2)

Intellect is everything; so it possesses everything in self-identical stability. BF

(9) Plotinus 5.3 [49] 5 (28-31; 42-4), for full context, see under **4(a)**.

But if thinking and its object are a unity, how does it follow that the thinker will think itself? For the act of thinking may embrace, so to speak, its object or may be the same as it – but it is not yet clear how thought thinks itself. ... But being and the intelligible are one with the activity; Intellect, thought and the intelligible – all are a unity. So if its thought is the intelligible, and if the intelligible is itself, then it will think itself. BF

(10) Plotinus 5.4 [7] 2 (44-8)

Thought does not have as its objects things which exist before it, as sensation has in the case of sensible objects, but thought *is* the things [being thought], for their forms are not imported – for where could they be

imported from? Rather it exists there together with the things, and is the same as them, a unity. Knowledge of the immaterial is the same as the things being thought. BF

(11) Plotinus 5.9 [5] 5 (6-34)

But if [Intellect] thinks by itself and from its own resources, it itself is what it thinks. For if its essence were something other than it, and if its objects were something else, its very essence would be mindless (*anôetos*), and it would exist in potentiality not actuality. So we must not separate the one from the other. But it is our habit, acting from our worldly experience, to distinguish even things in that world conceptually. What then is it that is active, what is it that is thinking, that we make thought and its objects identical?

[12] The answer is that obviously Intellect, being Intellect, really thinks real Beings, and gives them their Being. Therefore it is those Beings. For it will think them either as existing elsewhere or within itself as itself. It is not possible that they are elsewhere – where could they be? Therefore it thinks itself within itself. For they are certainly not to be found among sensibles, as some think. For no primary Being is sensible; for the form in a sensible object is an image of Being in matter, and any form that is found in one thing comes to it from something else and is an image of it.

[19] If there is to be 'a creator of the universe [Plato *Tim.* 28C3-4]', he will not think items that are in what does not yet exist in order to create it. So they must exist prior to the universe, not as impressions of something else but as archetypes, primary Beings, the essence of Intellect. If it is claimed that forming principles are sufficient, then these are clearly eternal; if they are eternal and unaffected then they must exist in Intellect of this sort, which is prior to condition (*hexis*), Nature and soul, which all exist in potentiality. So Intellect is the real Beings, and does not think them as something outside itself, for they are neither prior nor posterior to it. It is like the primary lawgiver, or even the law of being itself. So it was right to say 'to think is the same thing as to be [Parmenides fr. 3 Diels-Kranz]' and 'knowledge of immaterial entities is the same as the entity [Aristotle, *DA* 3.4, 430a3-4; 3.7, 431a1-2]' and 'I sought myself as one of the real Beings [Heraclitus fr. 101 Diels-Kranz]'. So too with Recollection. For no real Being is outside Intellect or in a location; they endure for ever within themselves, admitting neither alteration nor destruction – that is why they are real Beings. BF

(12) Plotinus 5.9 [5] 8 (3-4)

Intellect as a whole is all the forms, and each form is each [aspect of] mind. BF

(13) Plotinus 6.9 [9] 5 (14-15)

We must admit that Intellect is a peaceful, tranquil motion, containing all things and being all things. BF

(14) Philoponus *in de Intellectu* pp. 20-1 Verbeke (*CLCAG*) *ms.* lines 90-02

For if just as sense in actuality is nothing other than immaterial sensible forms, so intellect, having become actual, is intelligible forms, then it is natural that when it becomes actual it has understanding of itself too. For in understanding them it understands itself. The intellect in actuality is the intelligibles in the way in which sense in actuality is the things perceived; for knowledge is not something other than the things known. Knowledge is theorems which are not actualised, and the dispositional intellect is intelligible things which are not understood but, so to speak, stored. When, therefore, intellect takes each intelligible thing separately and as it were actualises it, it is intellect in actuality (for it is not possible to understand a plurality of things all at once). But when it takes intelligible things all at once and without their being active, it is dispositional (*in habitu*) intellect. If, therefore, the intellect is identical with the things understood, it certainly stands to reason that whenever it understands, it understands itself. WC

How far does Damascius qualify the claim that knowledge and thought are identical with their objects? Cosmin Andron argues that he considers thinking to be only 'almost' identical with its objects (*noêta*), and in general knowledge with its object (*gnôston*); that from these objects we should distinguish the *dianoêma* and *gnôsma*, which are consubstantial with the knower; but that even with these knowledge is not so much identical as in conformity (*kata*).

(15) Damascius *On First Principles* 2.149,13-20 Westerink-Combès

For perception has its being in accordance with (*kata*) the sense-image (*aisthêma*), imagination with the imprint (*tupos*), opining (*doxasis*) and discursive thinking (*dianoêsis*), with the thought (*dianoêma*) and the opinion (*doxasma*). For in general, knowledge (*gnôsis*) is in accordance with the *gnôsma*, so to speak. And is the *gnôsma* the thing known (*to gnôston*) itself? Rather, it is already consubstantial with the knower. Or at least knowledge is in accordance with, rather than being, this [*gnôsma*]. RRKS

(16) Damascius *in Phaed.* I, 88,1-2 and 90,5-6 Westerink

Intellect's thinking (*noêsis*) is called sight as an impassive activity, and touch as unified with intelligibles (*noêta*) as almost (*skhedon*) being the intelligibles themselves. ...

Hence the thinking of intellect is the truest, because it is indivisible from the things thought (*noêta*). RRKS

Reading

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A.H. Armstrong, 'The background of the doctrine "that the intelligibles are not outside the intellect" ', in *Les Sources de Plotin*, Fondation Hardt, Entretiens 5, Vandoeuvres-Geneva 1957, 393-425.
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P. Hadot, 'La conception plotinienne de l'identité entre l'intellect et son objet', in G. Romeyer-Dherbey, *Corps et âme: sur le de Anima d'Aristote*, Paris 1996, repr. in P. Hadot, Plotin et Porphyre, *Études néoplatoniciennes* 87, Paris 1999.
A.C. Lloyd, *Form and Universal in Aristotle*, Francis Cairns, Liverpool 1981, 10-17.
Richard Sorabji, *Time, Creation and the Continuum*, London 1983, ch. 10.

3(l) Intelligibles within intellect: connexion with their identity?

I have argued in the Introduction that Plotinus, with encouragement from the Stoics, made Western Philosophy take the inward turn that is so familiar to us from Descartes. One sign of this is the importance given by Plotinus to the view that intelligibles are inside the intellect. Porphyry reports in his *Life of Plotinus*, chs 18 and 20, that at first he argued against Plotinus, but after a debate in the seminar, involving two replies by Amelius, changed his mind. Putting the objects of Intellect outside the Intellect, as both Porphyry and Longinus tried to, determines nothing about their dependence on intellect, since Porphyry and Longinus took opposite views on whether the Forms were prior or posterior to the divine Intellect. But Plotinus seems to connect the idea that intelligibles are within Intellect with the idea that intelligibles are *identical* with Intellect, in two passages quoted in the last section, 3.9 [13] 1 (4-9; 12-21); 5.9 [5] 5 (12-16; 26-8).

A complication is that Plotinus also seems to require the intelligibles to be within Intellect on the apparently opposite ground, further detailed in **Logic and Metaphysics 15(c)**, that Being must after all be conceived as *prior* to Intellect (*proepinoein*), rather than simply identical with it, and that Intellect is best understood as the activity of Being, 5.9 [5] 8 (11-15).

(1) Porphyry *Life of Plotinus* 18,10-11 Henry-Schwyzer

That is why I even wrote an attack on [Plotinus] and tried to show that the object of intellectual thought existed outside the intellect. RRKS

(2) Proclus *in Tim.* 1.322,20-4 Diehl

Of the early people some, like Plotinus, made the demiurgic Craftsman himself contain the Models of all [or universal – see narrative preceding **18(b)**(12) below] things, but others made it not him who contained them, saying either that the Model was prior to him, or that it was posterior: prior, like Porphyry, posterior, like Longinus. RRKS

(3) Plotinus 3.9 [13] 1 (4-9; 12-21)

Then does [Plato] say that the Ideas already exist before the Intellect,

and that, since they exist, Intellect thinks them? First, then, we must inquire if that thing, I mean the Living Being, is not Intellect but different from Intellect, since what contemplates it is Intellect, so that the Living Being is not itself Intellect. Rather, we shall call it intelligible and we shall say that Intellect has what it sees outside itself, so that Intellect contains images and not the real thing, if the real thing is [out] there. ...

So far as what is being said, nothing prevents the two being one, though divided in thought if only as being the one intelligible, the other intelligising. For [Plato] does not say that what [Intellect] sees is altogether in something different, but that what it sees is in it by its having the intelligible within itself. Or nothing prevents the intelligible also being an intellect at rest in unity and quiet, while the nature of the Intellect which sees the intellect within itself is to be an activity derived from that [other] intellect and seeing it. And by seeing it as it is, it is the intellect of that intellect because it thinks it. But by thinking it, it is itself both intellect and intelligible in a different way by imitation. RRKS

(4) Plotinus 5.9 [5] 5 (12-16; 26-8)

The answer is that obviously Intellect, being Intellect, really thinks real Beings, and gives them their Being. Therefore it is those Beings. For it will think them either as existing elsewhere or within itself as itself. It is not possible that they are elsewhere – where could they be? Therefore it thinks itself within itself. ...

So Intellect is the real Beings, and does not think them as something outside itself, for they are neither prior nor posterior to it. BF

(5) Plotinus 5.9 [5] 8 (11-15)

But since we must think of Being as prior (*proepinoein*) to Intellect, we must posit that real Beings lie within what is thinking them, and that activity and thought is present in real Beings, just as the activity of fire is already present in fire; real Beings contain the unity that is Intellect within themselves as their activity. BF

Proclus, speaking of human intellect rather than universal Intellect, denies the view that the Forms are within us, treating it as allied with Plotinus' belief in undescended soul.

(6) Proclus *in Parm.* 134A, col. 948,14-20 Cousin

It is neither necessary to situate the intelligible world within ourselves, as some claim, in order for us to know that the intelligibles are in us (for they transcend us and are the cause of our being); nor should we say that some part of our soul remains above so that through this we are in contact with the intelligibles. JO

3(m) Why is our thinking intermittent?

Despite the productive intellect in us thinking uninterruptedly, Aristotle *DA* 3.5, 430a22, Aristotle says that we have to stop philosophising in order to eat, *EN* 10.8. Theophrastus says our thinking is intermittent because the active intellect is mixed [with our potential intellect]. Priscian explains that this is because potential intellect turns toward body. This is very much Plotinus' view of our discursive, as opposed to our undescended, thinking (see **3(e)**). Themistius, echoing Aristotle *DA* 3.3, 427b16-18, says that we think only when we wish to.

(1) Theophrastus *ap.* Themistium *in DA* 102, 28-9 = 108,27-8 (= FHS&G 320A, B)

Since intellect is in us, why [do we] not always [think]? Or why is there forgetfulness and error [and 108, falsehood]? Is it because of the mixture? RRKS

(2) Priscian *Metaphrasis in Theophrastum* 29,1-3

And why do we not think always? Or is it that intellect is always thinking, but the soul does not always use intellect, even though it is present, because it is involved in turning (*strophê*) towards bodies? RRKS

(3) Themistius *in DA* 99,11-17

Productive intellect has the same relation to potential intellect as craft has to matter, and so one becomes all things, the other makes all things. And that is why it is up to us to think when we wish (*boulesthai*). For the craft does not come from outside the matter, in the way the bronzesmith's craft comes from outside the bronze and the carpenter's from outside the wood. Rather the productive intellect imbues the entire potential intellect, as if the carpenter did not preside over the timber and the bronzesmith over the bronze from the outside, but was able to go right through the whole of it. RRKS

3(n) Are intelligibles efficient or final causes?

There is a strong case for Aristotle regarding intelligibles as efficient causes of thought, just as perceptibles are of perception. In *DA* 3.2, 3.4, 3.7, 3.8, we have seen (**3(k)**), Aristotle applies to intelligibles and perceptibles alike the thesis about agency which is stated in *Physics* 3.3. Although, 'teaching' does not mean the same as 'learning', Aristotle there says, when someone learns from a teacher, there is only one activity going on, the activity of teaching-and-learning. And in general, the activity of the agent is identical numerically (though not definitionally) with that of the patient. Perceptibles and intelligibles are, in *DA* 3, treated like teachers as agents, when they are said, in their action on the mind, to be identical with the mind's own action of apprehending them. So far, intelligibles sound like efficient causes.

But could intelligibles be seen instead, like objects of desire, as final causes? *DA* 3.5 may seem to switch from making intelligibles serve as the agent to making the active intellect serve as the agent. But Aristotle's successor, Theophrastus, raises the question whether the agent is the intellect or the intelligible, *ap.* Themistium *in DA* 108,3-4, and Alexander *DA* 88,24-89,8 says that it is only *qua* intelligible that the active intellect can be described as agent.

Aristotle *Metaphysics* 12.7, 1072a27-8, has been pointed to by E. Booth as at least part of a case for taking intelligibles as final causes, although Booth thinks that this contradicts Aristotle *DA* 3. But pseudo-Alexander *in Metaph.* 693,37-8 and Themistius *in Metaph. 12*, 18,21-30, think that it is only in the special case of God that Aristotle there claims that the intelligible (God) must also be an object of desire. Similarly, pseudo-Alexander comments that evils can be intelligibles, but are not objects of desire even if Alexander says that evil is thought only as a privation of good, fr. 29 on Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, ed. Freudenthal from the Arabic of Averroes.

(1) Theophrastus *ap.* Themistium *in DA* 108,3-4 (= FHS&G 307A)

And is the starting point from the [object], or from the [intellect] itself? RRKS

(2) Alexander *DA* 88,24-89,1; 89,4-6

This [productive intellect] would be the strictly and supremely intelligible form and what is separate from matter is like that. For in all cases, that which is something supremely and strictly is what causes other things to be of that kind. ... So what is supremely and by its own nature intelligible would plausibly be the cause of thought in other things, and the productive (*poiêtikos*) intellect would be like that. RRKS

(3) pseudo-Alexander *in Metaph.* 693,37-9

[Since] some things are objects of desire but not of intellection, like a loaf of bread, and again other things are objects of intellection, not desire, like evils, [Aristotle] shows that what is primarily and strictly an object of intellection and what is strictly an object of desire are the same. RRKS

Reading

E. Booth, 'St Augustine's *notitia sui* related to Aristotle and the early Neoplatonists', *Augustiniana* 27, 1977, 70-132, at 108; 116-18.

3(o) Are images needed in all thought and memory?

Plato says that while mathematicians need diagrams, philosophical thought can dispense with this, *Rep.* 510B, 511C, 532A. Aristotle disagrees: all human thinking needs the mental images of imagination, *DA* 3.7, 431a16; b2; 432a3-14; *Mem.* 1, 449b31-450a1. Plotinus counters: some thought does not engage the imagination, 6.5 [23] 7 (3-6); 5.8 [31] 11 (4), and, translated in **3(f)** above, 4.3 [27] 30 (5-16); 1.4 [46] 10 (6-29). Augustine follows Plotinus in making images actually conflict with

mystical contemplation of God, *Confessions* 9.10.25, and with knowledge of one's own soul or self, *On the Trinity* 10.5.7-10.6.8, 10.10.16, 10.8.11. Among the late Neoplatonists, Geometry has to spread its Platonic concepts (*logoi*) out in the imagination, but it looks as if this is a special case not required in all thought, Syrianus *in Metaph* 12,29-13,3, 50,6-7, 91,22-4 and 29-34, 95,29-36, 95,13-17, 186,17-19, Proclus *in Eucl. 1*, 12,9-13,26, 51,13-20, 54,14-55,13, 121,2-7, 141,2-19, 'Simplicius' *in DA* 233,7-17, 277,1-6, 277,30-278,6, see for translations **Logic and Metaphysics 12(b)**.

Cosmin Andron has drawn my attention to the following further responses. Porphyry sides with Aristotle, *Sentences* 16,6-11, but 'Simplicius' takes Aristotle to require images only for discursive thought, *in DA* 267,11-268,25. Damascius says that images are not needed for knowledge (*gnôsis*) of the unit, the point, the now, justice and temperance, *in Phaed.* I, 112,1-5 Westerink, and Olympiodorus says the same about universals, *in Phaed.* II, 15-17 Westerink.

Images are required for memory by Aristotle, even for memory of intelligibles, *Mem.* 1, 450a12-13. A higher kind of imagination (*phantasia*) is introduced for intelligibles by Plotinus 4.3 [27] 31 and Plutarch of Athens, *ap.* 'Philoponum' *in DA* 515,12-15. Avicenna uses Aristotle to argue that our intellect cannot store intelligibles within, but must make contact with an external intellect. But images are not needed for all memory in Augustine *Confessions* 10.8.12-10.17.26, where the different metaphor of a storehouse allows one in some cases to remember the thing itself (*res ipsa*), without an image.

4. Self-Awareness

Our self-awareness was a very important subject for the Neoplatonists, because, from Iamblichus on, they regarded the Delphic saying 'Know thyself' as the gateway to knowledge of Plato and of the whole of Philosophy (see translations under **15(a)** below) and, as Augustine learnt from the Neoplatonists, they looked for God within (translations under **15(b)**).

Self-awareness has been thought problematic in modern Continental Philosophy, on the ground that the subject and object of awareness ought to be distinct from each other. Among analytic philosophers too, David Armstrong, for example, has argued that a state of mind cannot be conscious of itself, any more than a man can eat himself up. But a man can maintain himself or destroy himself by eating or not eating, so it needs more discussion which case self-awareness would resemble.

Reading

D. Armstrong, *A Materialist Theory of Mind*, London 1993, 385.

F. Brentano, *Psychologie vom empirischen Standpunkt*, 1874, 179-83, A.C. Rancurello, D.B. Terrell, L.L. McAlister, London 1973, 127ff.

Dan Zahavi, *Self-Awareness and Alterity*, Evanston Illinois 1999, 6-8; 15-19; 28-30.

Two paradoxes of self-awareness discussed in antiquity concerned the questions whether it would be contentless or infinitely regressive.

4(a) Self-awareness as contentless

Plato in *Charmides* 167A-169C raises doubts about the idea that temperance is knowledge of what one knows and does not know. He remains uncertain whether there can be knowledge of knowledge (*epistêmê epistêmês*) because of doubts about the analogous case of vision. Vision cannot be vision of itself and not of colour. Presumably, such vision would have no content, if colour was not included in the content. Analogously, knowledge of knowledge would be contentless.

One solution, Aristotelian in spirit, to Plato's problem would be that, when we are aware of seeing, we perceive that we perceive *colour*. So colour is not excluded after all, in Plato's way, from the content of the self-awareness. This is the sort of solution indicated by Aristotle *DA* 3.2, translated in **4(b)** below. Compare *EE* 1245a5-9, mentioned in **4(e)** below, for the view that in perceiving oneself perceiving the desirable, one connects desirability with oneself.

Aristotle believes that a disembodied intellect thinks itself. But on one interpretation of what he means, he would avoid the difficulty of contentless thought. Self-thinking is postulated in *DA* 3.4, 430a2-4; *Metaph.* 12.7, 1072b19-21 (see also *DA* 3.4, 429b9; *Metaph.* 12.9, 1074b38-1075a5). In the first two passages a reason is given (as the word 'for' indicates) why the self-thinking occurs, and the reason is the idea discussed above under **3(k)** that, for reasons explained there, disembodied intellect is identical with what it thinks. Its thought may have a rich intellectual content. The divine Intellect postulated by Aristotle may be thinking philosophical

propositions. But in doing so, it thinks itself, because the propositions it thinks are, in the way explained, identical with itself. Though this is not the only explanation of Aristotle's divine Intellect being a self-thinker, it is given as an explanation by Aristotle, by Alexander *DA* 86,14-23; by 'Alexander' *in Metaph.* 698,1-15; and by Philoponus *On Aristotle on Intellect* 20,90-21,93; 21,7-16, and is endorsed as true of divine Intellect by Plotinus 5.3 [49] 5 (42-8). The point is put in terms of Intellect thinking itself incidentally (*kata sumbebêkos, secundum accidens*) by Alexander *DA* 86,14-23 and Philoponus *On Aristotle On Intellect* 21,7-11. Aristotle himself says it appears that scientific understanding, perception, opinion, and discursive thought are directed to themselves only as a side effect (*en parergôi*), *Metaph.* 12.9, 1074b35-6.

Plotinus emphasises, as regards the human intellect, that even though it too is self-thinking, nothing follows about *our* being aware of its thinking (see references to Plotinus in **4(c)**). That takes a special effort and mostly we are unaware of its thinking.

The identity which Aristotle postulates between intellect and what it thinks is the restricted kind of identity which he also postulates between the act of thinking and what is thought. This is not definitional identity: 'thinking' and 'being thought' do not mean the same thing. Rather, it is numerical identity: if you are counting activities, the activity of thinking and the object of thought acting on the mind, should not be counted as two activities, but as one. This is merely one example of the general causal principle of *Phys.* 3.3 about the activity of agent and patient, there illustrated by the case of teaching and being taught. Although the expressions 'teaching' and 'being taught' do not mean the same, there is only one activity going on, just as the road from Thebes to Athens and the road from Athens to Thebes are only one road.

Reading

Richard Norman, 'Aristotle's Philosopher-God', *Phronesis* 14, 1969, 63-74, repr. in J. Barnes, M. Schofield, R. Sorabji, eds, *Articles on Aristotle* vol. 4, London 1979.

(1) Plato *Charmides* 167C-D; 168D-E

Socrates: Consider if it seems to you that there is a kind of sight which is not the sight of things of which there is sight in the other cases, but which is the sight of itself and of the cases of sight, and similarly of cases of non-sight. Though it is sight, it sees no colour, but sees itself and the other cases of sight. Does it seem to you that there is any such kind of sight?

Critias: Heavens, no.

Soc: Sight, at any rate, must, I suppose, my good friend, have some colour, if it is going to see itself, for sight would never see anything colourless.

Crit: No, indeed. RRKS

(2) Aristotle *Metaph.* 12.9, 1074b35-6

It appears that scientific understanding, perception, opinion, and discursive thought are always directed to something else, and to themselves only as a side effect (*en parergôi*). RRKS

(3) Aristotle *DA* 3.4, 430a2-4

And [intellect itself] (*nous*) is thinkable (*noêtos*) just as the things that are thinkable are. For in the case of things without matter that which thinks (*nooun*) is the same as that which is thought (*nooumenon*). ARL

(4) Aristotle *Metaph.* 12.7, 1072b19-21

And intellect (*nous*) thinks (*noein*) itself by participation (*metalêpsis*) in the object of thought (*noêtos*). For it becomes an object of thought by touching (*thinganein*) and thinking, so that intellect and object of thought are the same. ARL

(5) Aristotle *Metaph.* 12.9, 1074b29-35

Next it is clear that the most honourable thing would be something other than the thinking mind (*nous*), [namely] the thing being thought. For to think (*noein*) and thinking (*noêsis*) will belong even to that which thinks the worst [object], so that if this is to be avoided (for not to see some things is superior to seeing [them]) thinking would not be the [thing which is] best. [Intellect] therefore thinks itself, since it is the most superior thing, and thinking is a thinking of thinking. ARL

(6) Alexander *DA* 86,14-23

Since the intellect at the level of actuality is nothing other than the form that is thought (just as has also been shown in the case of perception), the dispositional intellect (*ho en hexei nous*) – that is, the intellect able to think on its own and grasp the forms of intelligibles in themselves – is already able to think itself. For since it is itself the form that is thought (given that by thinking it becomes what it thinks), that which has the disposition of thinking forms therefore has the disposition and ability to think itself. For by thinking it becomes the very thing which it is able to think. Primarily (*proêgoumenôs*) and in itself, it is thinking the intelligible form whenever it thinks; but incidentally (*kata sumbebêkos*) [it is thinking] itself, because it belongs to it incidentally that it becomes the thing it thinks whenever it thinks. VC

(7) pseudo-Alexander *in Metaph.* 698,1-15

And since actual (*kat' energeian*) intellect is nothing other than the form thought, as actual sense is the actual sense object, dispositional (*en hexei*) intellect (that is, intellect which is capable of thinking by its own agency and taking the forms of objects of thought on their own), is already capable of thinking itself too; since indeed it is the form it thinks, if indeed in thinking it becomes what it thinks. It follows that what has the disposition

of thinking forms also has the disposition and power of thinking itself. For if it is capable of thinking something, in thinking it becomes that very thing, and *is* it when it thinks, primarily and of itself thinking the form that is thought, but incidentally (*kata sumbebêkos*) thinking itself because it is incidental to it, when it thinks, to become that which it thinks. So before intellect thinks actually, thinker and thing thought are relative to one another and opposed to one another as relatives. But when they act, becoming one they put an end to the opposition; for the account of relatives cannot fit them. Hence actual intellect, becoming the same as the thing thought, is reasonably said to think itself. WC

(8) Philoponus *in de Intellectu* pp. 20-1 Verbeke (*CLCAG*), *ms.* lines 90-3; 00-02

For if just as sense in actuality is nothing other than immaterial sensible forms, so intellect, having become actual, is intelligible forms, then it is natural that when it becomes actual it has understanding of itself too. For in understanding them it understands itself. ... If, therefore, the intellect is identical with the things understood, it is certainly natural that, whenever it understands, it understands itself. WC

(9) Philoponus *in de Intellectu* p. 21 Verbeke (*CLCAG*) *ms.* lines 7-10

The reply must be that even if it [that which understands] is the same *qua* subject [as that which is understood] it differs in the manner it is both. Intellect insofar as it is intellect is primarily something which understands intelligible things. But because for it to understand is for it to become those things which it understands, on that account in understanding them it understands itself. It is incidentally (*kata sumbebêkos*), then, that it understands itself. WC

There are several other reasons for the divine Intellect to think itself. First, it thinks only the best, but it itself is best, Aristotle *Metaph.* 12.9, 1074b29-35 above; Alcinous *Didaskalikos* ch. 10, 164,27-31 below. Secondly, it is simple and so must think what is simple, and that is itself, Alexander(?) *Mantissa* 109,4-110,3.

Alexander(?) *Mantissa* 109,4-110,3, which may or may not be by Alexander, (i) repeats the identity argument for intellect thinking itself in connexion with the human dispositional intellect (*nous en hexei*), and adds an extra reason, (ii) this intellect thinks all intelligibles, and it is one of the intelligibles. In both ways it thinks itself incidentally. But it is further added (iii) that the first Intellect in actuality is different. Although the same reason for self-thinking (*dia tên autên aitian*) – which reason? – applies to the first Intellect (109,24), the first Intellect needs to be simple, and so thinks *only* itself, and presumably no other intelligibles.

Does the thought of Alexander(?)'s first Intellect escape being contentless? The problem is that if its thinking is to be simple (a requirement which Plotinus avoids), it runs the risk of being contentless.

(10) Alcinous *Didaskalikos* ch. 10, 164,27-31 Dillon

Since the primary intellect is the finest of things, it follows that the object of its intelligising must also be supremely fine. But there is nothing finer than this intellect. Therefore it must be everlastingly engaged in thinking of itself and its own thoughts, and this activity of it is Form. JD

(11) Alexander(?) *Mantissa* 109,4-110,3

The intellect which possesses the disposition [for intellection] and is acting can think itself. For it is not in that it is an intellect that it will possess thinking and being thought together and in the same respect, but first [of all it will do so] in the way in which intellect in actuality is the same as things that are thought in actuality. Thinking these it will think itself, if, in thinking, intellect becomes the same as the things which it thinks. For if the things that are thought are the same as intellect in actuality, and it thinks these, it comes to think itself. For in intelligising it comes to be the same as the things that are thought, but when not intelligising it is other than they. In this way sensation too may be said to sense itself, since it senses the things which in actuality become the same as it. For as we said, sensation in actuality, too, *is* the thing that can be sensed. For both sensation and intellect apprehend their proper [objects] by grasping the forms without the matter.

(ii) [109,14] Moreover, intellect may be said to think itself not in that it is intellect, but in that it is itself intelligible. For it is as intelligible that it apprehends [itself], just as [it does] each of the other intelligibles too, not as intellect. For it is an incidental attribute of intellect that it is also intelligible; for since it too is one of the things that there are, and it is not perceptible by the senses, the remaining [possibility] is that it be intelligible. For if it was as intellect and in that it is intellect that it was the object of its own thought, it would not think anything else that is not intellect, and so it would think only itself. But [as it is], in thinking the intelligibles which before they are thought are not intellect, it also thinks itself as like this, as being one among the intelligibles. So this intellect incidentally comes to think itself, advancing from the material intellect.

(iii) [109,23] And the primary intellect, intellect in actuality, also thinks itself in a similar way and for the same reason. But it has something more than this [human] intellect; for it does not think anything other than itself. For by being intelligible it is the object of its own thought; and, by being intelligible in actuality and in its own nature, it will always be an object of thought; and clearly [it will be the object] of what is always intelligising in actuality. But the only thing that is always intelligising in actuality is intellect itself; so it will always think itself. [It will think itself] alone, inasmuch as it is simple. For intellect that is simple thinks what is simple, and nothing else is a simple intelligible except itself. For it is unmixed and without matter and having nothing potential in itself. So it will think itself

alone. Thus in that it is intellect, it will think itself as intelligible; in that it is both intellect and intelligible in actuality, it will always think itself; in that it alone is simple, it will think itself alone. For itself alone being simple it thinks of something simple, and it itself alone among the intelligibles is simple. RWS

The problem of contentless self-cognition is re-opened by the Pyrrhonian sceptic, Sextus Empiricus, a contemporary of Alexander, at *Math.* 7.284-6; 310-12. The reference to sight suggests he, or his source, is drawing on Plato's *Charmides*. Man cannot apprehend (*katalambanein*) himself, nor can his intellect, any more than sight can see itself. For if part is supposed to apprehend part, how will the apprehending part in its turn be apprehended? A regress threatens. If, on the other hand, whole apprehends whole, will the whole be the apprehender? If so, that leaves no content to be apprehended. Or will the whole be the apprehended? But that leaves no apprehender. Sextus' reasoning appears to involve a fallacy, although this is not the point that Plotinus picks up when he answers Sextus. Sextus moves in 7.311 from 'intellect as a whole apprehends itself' to 'intellect will be as a whole [i.e. wholly] apprehension and apprehending' – as if it would be nothing else, and so could have no content. Sextus makes the same invalid move in 7.286 from 'as a whole he is investigating' to 'he is conceived as a whole [i.e. wholly] with the investigating' – as if he does nothing else, so has nothing to investigate.

Plotinus considers and rejects Sextus' part-part option at 5.3 [49] 1, and in 5.3 [49] 5 prefers the whole-whole option. He need not fear that the divine Intellect's self-thinking will be contentless, because at 5.3[49] 5 (42-8) he bases the self-thinking on the identity of thinker with object thought, whose content may be rich. As regards Sextus' question whether the whole is apprehender or apprehended, he stresses at lines (21-8) this same identity between thinker and object, which he compares with interpenetrating lights, 5.6 [24] 1 (16-23). Presumably, his idea is that Sextus is offering a false dichotomy in asking his question, for the whole is both apprehender and apprehended, these being identical. This does not stop Plotinus from reminding us a little later, at 5.3 [49] 10 (24-6), translated in **Logic and Metaphysics 13**, that the sameness is always accompanied by difference, and he makes explicit 6.7 [38] 40 (16-19) that the sameness of which Aristotle speaks is not one of definition.

Augustine stands the puzzle tackled by Plotinus on its head, when he argues that the soul knows itself directly, *On the Trinity* 10.4.6. Puzzles would indeed arise, if the soul needed to *seek* itself (cf. also *Confessions* 10.8.15; 10.16.25). Presumably, part would be seeking part, with paradoxical results. But in fact the soul as a whole (*tota*) has knowledge. So, since it knows itself as knowing, it knows itself as a whole (*totam*). 14.6.8 repeats the denial that the soul knows itself by a part-part relation, or by becoming twinned with itself. Some of the relevant passages are quoted under **4(f)** below.

(12) Sextus Empiricus *Math.* 7.284-6; 310-12

[284] If man can be apprehended (*katalambanein, katalêptos*), either he as a whole throughout the whole of himself investigates and apprehends himself, or as a whole he is what is investigated and falls under the apprehension <lacuna>, just as if someone also postulated a sight that saw itself. Either it will be as a whole seeing, or as a whole seen, or it will see itself with part, and with part be seen by itself.

[285] But if man as a whole throughout the whole of himself investigated himself and was an object of thought together with his as a whole thinking himself throughout the whole of himself, there would no longer be anything to be apprehended, which would be absurd. But if as a whole he were the object investigated, and as a whole were the object of thought together with being investigated, again there would be nothing left to do the investigating and apprehending.

[286] And it is not possible either for him to be supposed part of the time to be as a whole what investigates, part of the time by turns to be as a whole what is investigated. For when it is supposed that as a whole he is investigating, and he is conceived as a whole [i.e. wholly] with this (*sun toutôi noeitai holos*), i.e. with the fact that as a whole he is investigating, there will be nothing left over for him to investigate.

[310] Next it must be shown that thought (*dianoia*) does not know itself as the dogmatic philosophers think. For if intellect (*nous*) apprehends itself, either it will as a whole apprehend itself, or not at all as a whole, but using a part of itself for this purpose.

[311] It would not be able as a whole to apprehend itself. For if as a whole it apprehends itself (*holos katalambanetai*), it will be as a whole [i.e. wholly] apprehension and apprehending (*holos estai katalêpsis kai katalambanôn*), and if what apprehends is the whole, what is apprehended will no longer be anything, and it is most irrational that there should be an apprehender, but not be an object of the apprehension.

[312] Nor can intellect use any part for this purpose. For how [reading *pôs*] does the part apprehend itself? If as a whole, the object we are looking for will be nothing, while if with a part, how again will that part know itself? And so on *ad infinitum*. RRKS

(13) Plotinus 5.3 [49] 1 (1-16)

Must that which thinks itself be complex (*poikilos*) so that by using one part of itself to contemplate the other parts it can be said to be thinking itself? Is that which is entirely simplex (*haplous*) unable to turn in (*epistrephein*) on itself and its self-intellection? Or is it possible that even something which is not a composite can have intellection of itself? For that which is said to be able to think itself because it is a composite, in that it thinks one part of itself by means of another (just as we ourselves grasp by means of sense-perception our shape or the rest of our bodily characteristics) could not be said to truly know itself. For it would not be the whole which is known in this way if the thinker had not thought itself as well as its concomitants, and this will not be the self-thinker we are looking for, but one thing thinking another. So we must posit the self-intellection of a simplex and consider how this can be the case – if it can be – or else abandon the idea that anything can really think itself. But it is absolutely impossible to abandon it because of the many problems that that would cause. BF

(14) Plotinus 5.3 [49] 5 (1-28)

Is it the case then that [a man] sees one part of himself with another? If so, then one part will see, the other be seen, and this would not be 'the self-self [knowledge]'. So what if the whole is of a uniform nature, so that there is no difference between seer and seen? For in this way, by seeing part of himself to be the same as himself, he would be seeing himself; for the seer would not differ from what he sees. The answer is that first such a division of the self is absurd. For how can he divide himself? Certainly not by chance. And what is it that makes the division? The part that tells itself to contemplate, or the part that tells itself to be contemplated? Secondly how will the part that contemplates recognise itself in what it is contemplating when it has set itself up as the contemplator? For there was no contemplation in what is contemplated. Or if he knows himself in this manner, he will think of the contemplator and not the contemplated. Consequently he will not know himself in his entirety or as a whole; for the one whom he saw was the contemplated, not the contemplator. In this way he will have seen someone other than himself. Or else he will contribute from himself the part that has contemplated in order that he may know himself in perfection. But if he contributes what has contemplated, he will at the same time contribute the objects of its vision. So if the objects of contemplation are present in the act of contemplation, if they are mere images, then he does not contain them; but if he does contain them, he does not contain them by seeing them as a result of self-division. Rather he contemplated and contained them before any self-division took place. If this is the case, the act of contemplation must be identical with what it contemplates, and Intellect must be identical with the intelligible; otherwise there can be no truth. For that which contains real Beings will contain an image which is other than them – which is not the truth, for the truth cannot be the truth of anything but itself; it is just what it affirms. So Intellect, the Intelligible and Being, this primary being, are a unity, a primary Intellect containing real Beings – or rather an Intellect that is identical to real Beings. BF

(15) Plotinus 5.3 [49] 5 (42-8)

But Being and the intelligible are one with the activity; Intellect, thought and the intelligible – are all a unity. So if its thought is the intelligible, and if the intelligible is itself, then it will think itself; for it will think by means of thought – viz. itself – and will think the intelligible – viz. itself. In both respects it will think itself then, both in that the thought is itself and in that the intelligible, which it thinks by means of the thought which is itself, is also itself. BF

(16) Plotinus 5.6 [24] 1 (16-21)

If you were to visualise a double illumination, the soul as a dimmer one

and the object of its thought a clearer one, and if you were then to visualise the illumination that sees as equal to the one that is seen, you would no longer be able to make any distinction between them because of any difference, and would identify the two – thinking of them as two, but seeing just the one. In just this way you will understand Intellect and the intelligible. BF

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4(b) Self-awareness as infinitely regressive

Aristotle at *DA* 3.2, 425b12-28 raises a worry whether there might be an infinite regress of *types* of faculty for being aware that we see, and being aware of being

aware that we see. More plausible would be the threat that there is an infinite regress of *individual* acts of such awareness, and Aristotle, we shall see, may have addressed this worry too.

The simplest answer is well explained, for example, by Colin Radford for the parallel case of a regress of knowing that we know ('Knowing and telling', *Philosophical Review* 78, 1969, 326-36). Radford shows that it is too complicated for the human mind to indulge in many iterations of knowing that one knows, by telling a story whose twists and turns would facilitate a number, but only a small number, of iterations. Any regress will be finite, so long as we do not take the mistaken view that we are aware of every act of awareness.

But does this mean that inevitably there will be in each case some act of which we are not aware? If I think of all my acts of thinking, and additionally think that I am thinking of them, I will still not yet be thinking that I am thinking of the last act. But there is nothing objectionable about admitting that one act will be overlooked.

Alexander(?) *Quaest.* 3.7, at 92,31 takes it that Aristotle's aim in our passage is precisely to stop a regress of acts of awareness, when he says at *DA* 3.2, 425b26ff., that there is a sense in which an act of perceiving is numerically identical with what it perceives. In that case, a regress of acts of awareness will not even begin, and this is the view which Franz Brentano endorses, drawing on Aristotle. There would still, however, be a regress of *descriptions* of the one act, with the last description being overlooked, if the regress is finite.

Aristotle *DA* 3.2, 425b12-28, follows Plato's *Charmides* in taking vision as his central example for discussing self-awareness. His verdict is that we do not see the fact that we are seeing, but perceive it by using our sight. The difference between seeing and perceiving by sight is illustrated by reference to the case of darkness, which we do not see, but perceive indirectly (*en parergôi*) by trying (and failing) to see. This solves all the problems that Aristotle raises.

First, perceiving by sight does not introduce a second type of faculty, but only the generic perceptual faculty under which sight falls, and this stops the threatened regress of faculties (425b15-17). Secondly, perceiving by sight escapes the problem (13-15) that, to avoid the *Charmides* threat (**4(a)**) of being contentless, it would have, like seeing, to include colour as one of its objects, but then cannot be a second faculty altogether distinct from sight ('*two* faculties for the same thing'), since faculties are identified by their objects, *DA* 2.4, 415a20-2, following Plato *Republic* 477C-D. This is unproblematic, because, as already said, the ability to perceive by sight does not introduce an altogether distinct faculty from sight, but merely the generic faculty of perception under which sight falls. Thirdly, perceiving by sight provides one of two answers to the objection (17-20) that if we *see* that which sees, then (since sight by definition apprehends colour, *DA* 2.6) that which sees would need to be coloured. The main answer is that perceiving by sight is not the same as seeing. But additionally, even if it had been, that which sees (the eye) does, on Aristotle's theory, in a way take on colours when it sees. I have elsewhere taken this to mean that the eye jelly takes on colour patches.

(1) Aristotle *DA* 3.2, 425b12-28

[Perceiving that we see] Since we perceive that we see and hear, one must perceive that one sees either by sight or by something else.

[By sight: reasons for] (i) But the same faculty will be a faculty both of sight and of the underlying colour [to avoid the contentlessness threat of

Plato *Charmides*]. So that either there will be two faculties [contrary to the practice of distinguishing faculties by objects, 415a20-2] for the same thing [colour], or sight will be sight of itself.

(ii) Again, if indeed the perception of sight were a faculty different from sight, either the faculties will go to infinity, or some faculty will be a faculty of itself, so that this ought to be brought about in the case of the first faculty.

[Difficulty] But there is a puzzle: if perceiving by sight is seeing, and what is seen is colour, or what has colour, if anyone is to see that which sees (*to horôn*), the first thing that sees will have colour.

[Solution (1): perceiving by sight is not seeing] It is evident, then, that perceiving by sight is not a single thing. For even when we are not seeing, we by sight discriminate darkness from light, but not in the same way.

[Solution (2): anyhow the organ is in a way coloured] Again, what sees is besides in a way coloured, since each sense organ is receptive of the sensible [quality] without matter. And that is why even when the sensibles have gone away, there are sensations and appearances (*phantasiai*) in the organs.

[No regress arises of acts of awareness] The activity of the sensed object and of the sense is one and the same activity, but the being of each is different. I mean, for example, active sound and active hearing. RRKS

(2) Alexander(?) *Quaestiones* 3.7, 92,13-93,2

Moreover, if [the sense] that senses and that according to which we sense that we are sensing are different, this will go on to infinity. For it is through another sense again that we will have self-awareness also of the sensation that we are seeing, and this again will have another [sense] sensing that, by sensing which it [itself] creates self-awareness, and this will go on to infinity; and this is most absurd. So what is left is that it is by the same [sense] that we sense both the things sensed and our own activity concerned with the things sensed.

[20] But if seeing is the activity of the power of sight, sight will apprehend both colours and seeing itself. If however that which sight is able to sense is necessarily coloured, seeing too, if it something that can be seen, will be coloured.

[23] Resolving the first difficulty, [Aristotle] first [*DA* 3.2, 425b20-2] made use of [the fact] that sight is able to sense not only colours and coloured things, but also the privation of them. For it was shown that every sense itself also senses the privation of its objects; at any rate, it is by sight that we sense both light and darkness. Secondly he noted [*DA* 3.2, 425b22-4] that seeing too is in a way coloured, if seeing comes about when the sense organ receives the form of the thing sensed without the matter that underlies it; as a sign of this he mentions that often, when the things seen have departed, there still remain behind in the senses certain sensations and images of them.

[31] Having said these things to resolve the difficulties that had been

raised, in what [comes] next he shows that, and how, [self-awareness] comes about. He says [*DA* 3.2, 425b26ff.] that the actuality of the thing sensed and of the sense are one, differing only in their account, since the being of sensation in actuality consists in possessing the form of the thing sensed without its matter, while that of the thing that is sensed in actuality [consists in] its form being possessed without its matter [by the thing sensing it]. RWS

4(c) Unity of self-awareness

Aristotle gives a certain unity to self-perception when he makes the 'common sense' responsible for it. His conclusion (**4(b)** above) that we do not see but perceive by using our sight that we are seeing is compatible, I believe, with what he wants to say in *On Sleep* ch. 2, 455a12-22, which is that the perceiving, when we use our sight, is not an act of one of the five senses as opposed to another, but an act of perception in its generic capacity. He speaks of the common capacity (*koinê dunamis*), which elsewhere he three times calls the common sense (*koinê aisthêsis*). His wording, when he says that one does not see that one sees (455a17), is slightly distorted by the fact that he is trying to make another point at the same time, namely that it is not by sight that one distinguishes sweet from white. Running the two points together, he says that it is not the case that by sight one sees that one sees or distinguishes sweet from white. The 'not by sight' gives the wrong emphasis to the first point. He would have done better to say, 'one does not see, but merely perceives by sight'. I think this is what he intends, especially as the immediately following lines refer back to *DA* 3.2.

Aristotle takes up the question of the unity of perception more explicitly when he raises the question, what discriminates sweet from white, a question which comes from Plato's *Theaetetus* 184B-186E. Plato answers that the senses must converge (*sunteinein*) on something unitary (*mia*), the soul, 184D. Aristotle substitutes for soul one particular capacity of the soul, the common sense, and he repeatedly stresses (*DA* 3.1, 425a30-b1; 3.2, 427a9-12; *On Sense Perception* 7, 449a6-20; cf. *DA* 3.7, 431a14-20; *On Sleep* 2, 455a12-22) that its role of comparing different types of sensible requires it to be unitary. Otherwise (*DA* 3.2, 426b17-23) it would be as if I perceived sweet and you perceived white. The point is repeated by the commentators ad loc. and e.g. by Alexander *in Sens.* 36,13-19; *DA* 60,27-61,3; Plotinus 4.7 [2] 6 (18-19), 'Philoponus' *in DA 3* 465,10; Philoponus *in DA* 13,7-20; 136,16-17.

Alexander in his non-commentary treatise *On the Soul* 65,2-10, repeats Aristotle's view from *On Sleep* 2 that it is by the common sense that we perceive ourselves seeing, and he, rightly, evinces no feeling of inconsistency when in *Quaestiones* 3.7, 92,13-93,2, he reports Aristotle's discussion of perceiving by sight that we see from Aristotle *On the Soul* 3.2, 425b12-28.

But Plotinus complicates the situation by addressing our apprehension (*antilêpsis*) not only of our sensing, but also of our thinking, our appetite and our psychological activities generally. In his reference to thinking, he is speaking not merely of the intellect's automatic self-thinking, but of *us* as sometimes aware, though also sometimes not aware, of our thinking. Plotinus tends to assign the double awareness of perceptions and thoughts to the imagination (*phantasia, phantastikon*), 4.3 [27] 30 (5-16); 1.4 [46] 10 (6-21). Presumably, Plotinus thinks imagination can perform this double job because of the point, made in the adjacent chapter, 4.3.31, and translated above under **2(b)**, that there are two faculties of

imagination, one concerned with intelligibles, one with sensibles. An earlier treatise refers apprehension of appetite to inner perception (*hê aisthêtikê hê endon dunamis*), or discursive reason, 4.8 [6] 8 (10-11), also translated above under **3(e)**, and of our psychological activity generally to the perceptual faculty, 5.1 [10] 12 (5-14), which is the faculty in which Aristotle had located *phantasia*. Plotinus describes self-consciousness in this last passage in terms of turning (*epistrephein*) the apprehension inwards and making it attend (*prosokhê*) within. But in the other two passages which invoke imagination, he compares mirroring, and speaks of thought bending back (*anakamptein*) and being thrust back again (*apôsthênai palin*). Several of the relevant passages have been translated also above under **3(f)**.

Proclus objects to this account on two grounds, without naming Plotinus. First, he says at *in Eucl. 1* 141,2-19, also translated under **2(f)**, that mirroring in the imagination by projecting (*proballein*) patterns there merely shows you the outward form (*morphê*). In order genuinely to see oneself (*heauton*), one would need to stand in the relationship exemplified by the self-thinking intellect which is both thinker and thing thought: one would need to become both seer and seen. This would require a procedure of turning (*strophê*) inwards.

Secondly, Proclus objects that there are not two or three, but many different types of mental activity and we need a single thing to exercise consciousness (*parakolouthein*) of all of them, *in Parm.* 957,28-958,11 Cousin. In cognition, there are the five senses, the common sense and reason. Among desires, there is appetite (*epithumia*), anger (*thumos*), deliberate choice (*proairesis*), to which a unitary vital faculty can give the nod (*sunepineuein*), having enabled us to say 'I have appetite', 'I am angry', 'I exercise deliberate choice'. But prior to (*pro*) both cognitions and desires, there is another unitary faculty conscious (*parakolouthein*) of all these activities, which says, 'I am perceiving', 'I am reasoning (*logizomai*)', 'I have appetite', 'I will (*boulomai*)'. It both knows the activities and distinguishes among them. It is set over (*epi* with dative) the common sense, and is prior to (*pro*) opinion (*doxa*), appetite and will (*boulêsis*).

In another passage, Proclus gives a unifying role to *logos*, reason, which can use faculties both higher and lower than itself, in order to judge about objects, *in Tim.* 1.254,31-255,20, and Philoponus also gives this role to reason *in DA* 14,33-5.

From a report about Proclus' teacher, Plutarch of Athens (not of Chaeroneia), we learn even more, in the commentary on Aristotle *On the Soul* 3 (464,20-465,31) ascribed to Philoponus, but thought by some to be by a pupil of Philoponus, and by others to be by the still later Stephanus. 'Philoponus' starts by saying that in Plutarch's view it was the lowest faculty of the rational soul, namely opinion (*doxa*), that was responsible for knowing the activities of the senses. But he finishes by saying that this was an interpretation of Plutarch by certain newer interpreters whom he rejects. For he has nowhere found Plutarch giving this view, but considers that Plutarch followed Alexander in holding the common sense responsible, a view which 'Philoponus' considers wrong. Why the discrepancy? Could Plutarch, unlike Aristotle, have located the common sense wholly or partly in the rational soul?

He could, if he included the common sense within *phantasia*. For as seen above, under **2(b)**, he is reported by 'Philoponus' at 515,12-15, as having been like Plotinus 3.6 [26] 4 (18-23); 4.3 [27] 31 (all texts translated above in **2(a)-(b)**) in recognising a higher kind of *phantasia* which is the lower boundary of discursive reason. Moreover, Plotinus, at least in the first of these two passages, equates the higher *phantasia* with opinion (*doxa*), so Plutarch might have done the same. The net result would be that both reports about Plutarch could be right: Plutarch might have made the common sense responsible, as 'Philoponus' says, but also, in a passage unnoticed by 'Philoponus', equated the common sense with *doxa*, so that the newer interpreters were right as well. Plutarch's pupil, Proclus, treats percep-

tion as opiniative at **4(c)**(21), following a Platonist tradition of imbuing sense with reason. This is an alternative to Blumenthal's suggestion that Plutarch changed his mind.

The newer interpreters had postulated an extra part of the rational soul which they called the 'attentive' (*prosektikon*). Because the human being is unitary, this part needs to apprehend all mental and even biological activities, or it would be, as Aristotle said, as if you perceived one thing and I another. But the part gets different names, being called the *prosektikon* insofar as it ranges over cognitive activities, and conscience (*suneidos*) insofar as it ranges over the vital desires. *Suneidêsis* was a name for both conscience and consciousness. Opinion could not do this work, because it could not apprehend activities higher than itself.

On the next page (466,18-29), 'Philoponus' endorses the role of the *prosektikon* and explains that *sight* could not know what it sees, because it would have to turn back (*epistrephein*) on itself, and such turning back would require it to be separable from body. This last explanation goes back at least as far as a commentator earlier than Proclus or 'Philoponus'. Porphyry, in *Sentences* 41, translated below in this section (**4(c) (vi)**), explains that sight, unlike intellect, cannot know itself, since by having its essence (*ousiôsthai*) in body, it is prevented from turning back (*strephesthai*) on itself. For bodies cannot penetrate themselves, a point which is further stressed by 'Simplicius' *in DA* 173,3-7, also translated below (**4(c) (v)**).

There is a final twist to the story because Aristotle's appeal to the common sense comes to be reinstated, but in a form that Aristotle himself would entirely repudiate. Common sense is turned into a rational, instead of a perceptual, faculty. We have raised the question whether this development might have started in Plutarch of Athens. It is certainly found in Priscian and in 'Simplicius' *in DA* 3, whose authorship is still disputed, but which is also assigned by Carlos Steel and Fernand Bossier to Priscian. In *Metaphrasis of Theophrastus* 21,32-22,23 Priscian says that Aristotle's successor, Theophrastus, agrees with Aristotle that it is the common sense which is conscious (*sunaisthanesthai*) that we see. Instead of repudiating the view, Priscian defends it, by saying that the common sense is more separable from bodies than are the individual senses, and so can turn back (*epistrephesthai*) into itself.

'Simplicius' agrees, *in DA* 187,27-188,35; 173,3-7. Only humans can perceive that they perceive, because only the rational can turn back (*epistrephein*) on itself. And rationality, as already hinted by Iamblichus, penetrates human sense perception, so that what perceives is to some extent separable from bodies. This separability is especially true of the *common* sense, which therefore has consciousness (*sunaisthêsis*) of our seeing. But it falls short of intellect and reason, in that it recognises not substance, nor power, but only activities, and in that it recognises individuals. Other things cannot turn back on themselves at all (*anepistrophon*).

The interpenetration of sense by reason, though repudiated by Aristotle, I believe (but contrast Charles Kahn, 'Aristotle on thinking', in M.C. Nussbaum, A.O. Rorty, eds, *Essays on Aristotle's de Anima*, Oxford 1992, ch. 19, 367-72), had a Platonist history. Plato himself considered *phantasia*, which Aristotle viewed as perceptual, as a kind of *doxa*, which Aristotle viewed as rational, *Sophist* 263E-264D; *Republic* 603A. Moreover, under **1(a)** and **(b)** we saw a Platonist tradition that *doxa* and *dianoia* are needed to supplement perception, Plato *Theaetetus* 186B-187A; Alcinous *Didaskalikos* ch. 4, 156,8-11; 154,40-155,5; Plotinus 5.3 [49] 3 (1-9); Proclus *in Tim.* 1.249,13-27; 1.292,27-293,5; (cf. *Platonic Theology* Saffrey-Westerink vol. 3, 23,25-24,2; Priscian *Metaphrasis of Theophrastus* 19,9-13). Proclus had gone further and made *doxa* penetrate sense perception, *in Tim.* 1.248,25-9; 1.251,16-17, and before him Iamblichus had contrasted our rational

perception as perception in a different sense from the irrational, according to the report of 'Simplicius' in a passage just mentioned, *in DA* 187,37, translated below.

The scope of the *prosektikon* is expanded by the head of Priscian's school, Damascius, when he makes it aware also of recollection, *Lectures 1 on Plato's Phaedo* §269; 271-2; *Lectures 2* §21-2.

A final point is that St Augustine, writing in Latin, agrees with the Neoplatonists that we cannot sense (*sentire*) by sight that we are seeing. Rather, he uses a phrase from Plotinus 4.8 [6] 8 (10-11), inner sense (*interior sensus*), and says that it perceives both corporeal objects and the senses, while all these things, including inner sense, are known by reason, *On Free Choice of the Will* 2.4.10 (41); *City of God* 22.29.

There has been modern controversy on whether thought or perception gives us awareness of our own perceptions and other psychological states. I offer an alternative to both views in 2004, forthcoming, and in a book in preparation on the self.

(i) Plato, Aristotle and Alexander

(1) Plato *Theaetetus* 184D

It would be terrible, my boy, if there were many senses seated in us as if in Trojan horses, rather than all these things converging (*sunteinein*) on some single form, whether that be soul, or whatever one should call it, by which we perceive all the sensibles through the senses as instruments. RRKS

(2) Aristotle *DA* 3.2, 426b17-23

Nor is it possible with separated [instruments] to discern that sweet is different from white, but both must be evident to some single thing (*heni*). Otherwise, even if I perceived one and you the other, it would be evident that they were different from each other. However, the single (*hen*) thing must say that they are different, for sweet is different from white. So it is the same thing that says so. RRKS

(3) Aristotle *On Sleep* 2, 455a15-22

But there is also a certain common capacity (*koinê dunamis*) which accompanies all the senses by which one perceives that one sees and hears. For it is not the case that by sight one sees that one sees and indeed discerns and is able to discern that sweet is different from white, nor is it by taste, nor sight, nor both, but by a certain part common to all the sense organs. For there is a unitary (*mia*) sense faculty, and the controlling sense organ is single (*hen*), although what it is to be a sense varies for each class such as sound or colour. RRKS

(4) Alexander *DA* 65,2-10

It is by this common sense that we perceive ourselves seeing and hearing and exercising each sense. For one who is seeing perceives himself seeing

and one who is hearing perceives himself hearing. For it is not by some other capacity besides <common [Bruns],> sense that we perceive ourselves perceiving. For we do not see that we are seeing nor hear that we are hearing, since seeing is not visible, nor hearing audible. Rather, it is the activity of the first, controlling sense faculty which is called 'common' by which self-awareness (*sunaisthêsis*) of perceiving accrues to those who perceive. RRKS

(ii) Plotinus

(5) Plotinus 4.3 [27] 30 (5-16)

Perhaps there might be a reception into the imagination (*phantastikon*) of the reason (*logos*) which is conscious (*parakolouthein*) of the intellect's thought content (*noêma*). For that thought content (*noêma*) has no parts, and remains hidden within without yet having proceeded (*proelthein*) forth as it were. But reason (*logos*) unfolds it and brings it from being a thought content into the imagination (*phantastikon*) and displays the thought content as if in a mirror. And that is how there is apprehension (*antilêpsis*) and retention (*monê*) and memory of it. And that is why, even though the soul is always moved towards thinking (*noêsis*), our apprehension (*antilêpsis*) [of the thinking] is when it comes to be in the imagination. The thinking is one thing, and the apprehension of it another. We are always thinking, but we do not always apprehend it. And this is because what receives [the thinking] receives not only thinking but also, on its other side, perceiving. RRKS

(6) Plotinus 1.4 [46] 10 (6-29)

It seems that apprehension (*antilêpsis*) exists and occurs when the thought turns back (*anakamptein*) and when that which is active in the soul because of its life is thrust back again (*aposthênai palin*), so to speak, as happens in a mirror when the surface is smooth, clear and held still. In such cases when the mirror is there the image (*eidôlon*) occurs, but when it is not, or is not in the same condition, the object of which there might have been an image is still actually there. In the same way with the soul, when that part of us which acts like this, and in which the likenesses of the reason and the intellect are imaged, is peaceful, then they are envisaged and known as it were perceptually (*aisthêtôs*) alongside the prior knowledge (*protera gnôsis*) that the intellect (*nous*) and the reason (*dianoia*) are active. But when it is disrupted because the harmony of the body is upset, the reason and intellect think without an image; then thinking takes place without imagination (*phantasia*). Consequently something like this might be concluded, that thinking does take place accompanied by imagination, although thinking is not the same as imagination. One could find many worthy activities, both theoretical and practical, when we are either contemplating or acting, which we may not be conscious (*parakolouthein*) of, although we are wide awake. For the person reading does not have to be

conscious that he is reading, particularly when he is reading with great concentration; nor does the person acting bravely have to be aware that he is doing so and that he is acting in accordance with bravery in so far as he is acting; there are countless other such instances. In fact awareness is likely to take the edge off the very activities of which we are aware. BF

(7) Plotinus 5.1 [10] 12 (5-14)

For not everything which is in the soul is immediately perceptible, but it reaches us when it reaches our sense perception. Whenever any part of the soul is active but does not communicate a share of that activity to the perceptive faculty, then it does not pervade the whole soul. So we do not yet cognise it, since we exist in conjunction with the perceptive faculty and are not just a part of the soul, but the whole of it. Furthermore each of the psychic faculties is always alive and always active according to its own special activity. But there is cognition only when communication and apprehension occur. Therefore if there is to be apprehension (*antilêpsis*) of things present in the way described, we must turn (*epistrephein*) the apprehending faculty inwards and make it concentrate its attention (*prosokhê*) there. BF

(8) Plotinus 4.8 [6] 8 (10-11)

For example, appetite which remains in the appetitive faculty is known to us only when we apprehend it with our powers of inner perception (*hê aisthêtikê hê endon dunamis*) or those of reasoning, or both. BF

(iii) Proclus

(9) Proclus *in Eucl. 1*, 141,2-19

Therefore just as nature stands creatively above the visible figures, so the soul, exercising her capacity to know, projects (*proballein*) on the imagination (*phantasia*), as on a mirror, the concepts (*logoi*) of the figures, and the imagination, receiving the figures in the form of images (*eidôla*) and containing displays (*emphaseis*) of what is within the soul, by their means affords the soul an opportunity to turn inward from the images and attend to herself (*eis to eisô strophê kai pros heautên energeia*). It is as if a man looking at himself in a mirror and marvelling at the power of nature and at his own appearance (*morphê*) should wish to look upon his actual self (*heauton*) and possess such a power as would enable him to become at the same time the seer and the object seen. In the same way, when the soul is looking outside herself at the imagination, seeing the figures depicted there and being struck (*ekplagênai*) by their beauty and orderedness, she is adoring her own concepts from which they are derived; and though she adores their beauty, she dismisses it as something imaged and seeks her own beauty and wants to go past it to the inside. GM

(10) Proclus *in Parm.* col. 957,28-958,11 Cousin

(1) For indeed hearing knows audibles in one way, the common sense knows all sensibles before these audibles in a different way, and before this common sense again, reason knows in a different way both these things and all the things that perception does not know.

(2) Moreover again, appetite (*epithumia*) desires some things, anger (*thumos*) aims at others, and deliberate choice (*proairesis*) moves [the soul] to others [reading: *alla*]. But moving the soul to all of these, there is a certain unitary vital power through which we say, 'I have appetite' and 'I am angry' and 'I deliberately choose'. That power gives the nod alike (*sunepineuein*) to all these [desires] and lives with all of them, being a desiderative power directed to every kind of desideratum.

(3) And indeed prior to (*pro*) both of these [(1) and (2)], there is something unitary in the soul, which often says 'I am perceiving', 'I am reasoning (*logizesthai*)', 'I have appetite' and 'I will (*boulesthai*)'. It is conscious of (*parakolouthein*) all these activities and cooperates with them. Otherwise, we would not know them all, nor could we say how they differ, unless there were in us some unitary thing without parts which knew them all which is set over (*epi*, with genitive) the common sense, prior to (*pro*) opinion (*doxa*), prior to appetite and prior to will. It knows their cognitions, has gathered their desires into a partless unity (*amerôs*), and in the case of each says 'I' and 'I am active'. RRKS

(11) Proclus *in Tim.* 1.254,31-255,20

But the soul is one and a plurality, so the judge (*kritikon*) is at the same time one and many, and the capacity of judgement is simple and diverse. 'What, then, is the single capacity?' one might ask. Reason (*logos*), we shall say. For when reason sets out to contemplate intelligibles (*noêta*), it uses both itself and intellection (*noêsis*). This is not because intellection is an instrument which reason uses, as is thought by Severus the Platonist, who ranks intellection as inferior to reason, but because intellection is the light of reason which perfects it, elevates it and makes the cognitive capacity in it shine.

[255,9] When reason enters on judging intermediate concepts (*logoi*), it uses discursive thought (*dianoia*), not itself alone, and through this it reverts (*epistrephesthai*) towards itself.

[255,11] When reason judges objects of opinion, it activates opinion too, when things in the imagination (*phantasta*) it activates imagination, when perceptibles perception. For when it investigates perceptible substance, and what each of the perceptible forms (*eidê*) is like, it uses opinion (*doxa*) as a collaborator in its investigation. For the concepts (*logoi*) of perceptibles are in opinion.

[255,16] And when it investigates a position or shape, for example how the earth is positioned with its pole on top, and what sort of relation it has

to heaven, it arouses imagination (*phantasia*) too, so as to consider what is being studied the way it is in terms of extension and shape. RRKS

(iv) 'Philoponus' on Plutarch of Athens and on the *prosektikon*

(12) 'Philoponus' *in DA* 3, 464,24-465,31

Plutarch said it was the function of the rational soul to know the activities of the senses. For he says that this happens by virtue of the inferior part of the rational soul, which is opinion (*doxa*). For opinion, the most common part of the soul and the inferior, joins the rational to the non-rational. For, as we have often come to know, it is always by the inferior parts of themselves that the first are joined to the second. So that is how it is now. He says, then, that it belongs to opinion to do these things and lay hold of the activities of the senses.

[464,30] But more recent interpreters neither tremble at Alexander's frown nor pay heed to Plutarch, but pushing Aristotle himself to one side they have devised a newer interpretation. They say that it belongs to the attentive (*prosektikon*) part of the rational soul to lay hold of the activities of the senses. For the rational soul, according to them, does not have only five powers, intellect, discursive thought, opinion, rational wish and choice (*nous, dianoia, doxa, boulêsis, proairesis*); they add another sixth power to the rational soul, which they call 'attentive'. This attentive part, they say, stands over what happens in a human being and says 'I exercised intellect', 'I thought', 'I opined', 'I became spirited', 'I experienced appetite'; and in general this attentive power of the rational soul ranges over all the powers, the rational, the non-rational and the vegetable. If, they say, the attentive power is to range over all, let it go over the senses too and say 'I saw', 'I heard'. For it is proper to what apprehends (*antilambanesthai*) the activities to say this. If it is the attentive part, then, that says this, it follows that this is what apprehends the activities of the senses. For there ought to be one thing apprehending all, since the human being is one. If *one* laid hold of these and *another* of those, it would be, as he [Aristotle *DA* 3.2, 426b17-21] himself says elsewhere, as if you perceived this and I that. It must, then be one thing, and that is the attentive part. This attentive part roves over all powers, cognitive and vital. But if it is roving over the cognitive, it is called 'attentive', which is why, when we want to rebuke someone who is wool-gathering in his cognitive activities we say 'Pay attention (*prosekhe*) to yourself!' Whereas if it is going through the vital powers it is called 'conscious' (*suneidos*), which is why the tragedy [Euripides *Orestes* 396] says 'Conscience (*sunesis*), since I am conscious (*suneidenai*) in myself of having done terrible things'. The attentive part, then, is what lays hold of the activities of the senses.

[465,17] And Plutarch, they say, did ill to hold opinion responsible. For there ought to be one thing that apprehends the activities of all the powers, and opinion does not lay hold of the activities of intellect. It does not say 'I

exercised intellect' or 'I thought'. Even if it says 'I opined' or 'I became spirited', still, it cannot contemplate the activities of the better powers. But saying this they are not accusing Plutarch. For I nowhere found him saying that the power which perceives the activities of the senses belongs to opinion, but in this he agrees with Alexander, and he too holds the common sense responsible. Both are convicted of speaking wrongly, since they say that the common sense lays hold of the activities of each sense. For the common sense lays hold of nothing that is not a sense object. Every sense object is in a body, but the activity is not in a body. Hence it is not a sense object. And if it is not a sense object, it does not fall under the common sense. WC

(13) 'Philoponus' *in DA* 3, 466,18-29

Besides, it is absurd that the same sense should know that it sees. For it must be by turning (*epistrephein*) back on itself after having seen the colour that it gets to know it sees. But if it turns on itself, it also has an activity which is separate [sc. from matter], and what has a separate activity has a separate substance, and on that account is eternal and incorporeal. So someone who says in an ambiguous way that the rational soul is immortal will be shouting out plainly that the non-rational soul is immortal; which is absurd. The senses are not eternal, and for that reason do not turn back on themselves. And if they do not turn back on themselves, they do not apprehend their own activities. For a thing's turning on itself is nothing other than its apprehending its own activities. So Aristotle does not speak rightly but, as we said, it belongs to the attentive part (*prosektikon*) of the soul to get to know the activities of the senses. WC

(14) Proclus *in Tim.* 2.306,1-2 Diehl

This account [of reasoning in the World Soul at Plato *Timaeus* 37A-B] Atticus took to apply to the power of attention (*prosektikê dunamis*). RRKS

(v) Priscian and 'Simplicius'

(15) Priscian *Metaphrasis* 21,32-22,23 (reporting Theophrastus)

Following this, about how we perceive that we perceive, he [Theophrastus] sets out his argument on the same lines as Aristotle, wanting the common sense to be that which has this extra awareness, since it is conscious (*sunaisthanesthai*) of both the activity of each [sense] and its inactivity. For the opposites are of the same [sense]. But the common sense is neither the same as the particular ones nor entirely different. For it is by way of the synthesis of all [the senses] and their concentration into an undivided one; hence in a way each [sense] is conscious (*sunaisthanetai*) that it perceives, not as having been divided off but as joined together in the one. For it

belongs to a power already separate from bodies to revert (*epistrephesthai*) into itself and know itself, and each is more corporeal insofar as it has been divided up, and it goes up more to what is apart by means of its indivisible unity with the others. For in fact this indivisible unity is appropriate to the forms which are apart from bodies.

[22,9] But if, as he himself well claims, it belongs to the same [sense] to be aware of opposites, and for this reason of [its own] inactivity also, on the one hand even each [sense] will grasp what is separate in a way from its own organs – for [otherwise] sight would not perceive that the sense organ's not being affected was darkness, for it [sight] appears to be active even when [that] is not affected – and, on the other, to a greater extent the common [sense], which is aware also of the inactivity of the senses themselves. Hence, also the common [sense], but not each [individual one], will be conscious of itself and of its own activity: and if of its activity, then also of its inactivity: and if of its inactivity, it would at the same time be both inactive and active, in that it was conscious [in this way]. Therefore it is inactive, on the one hand, as being divided off and by itself, and, on the other, it is active and insofar as it transcends its own special activity and inactivity. So that [it is active] in respect of being (*kata*) the common [sense], connected with (*kata*) which also is each [sense], not as each [individual one], nor [all] as divided off, but as united in (*kata*) the one union of all [the senses], of which it is the function to be aware of the objects of all the senses in the same [centre] and undividedly, being active in accordance with the different concepts (*logoi*). Hence also what is aware is in number one and indivisible, but in its being (*tôi einai*) divisible, in that it is active in accordance with different concepts (*logoi*). PH

(16) 'Simplicius' *in DA* 187,27-188,35

On the other hand perceiving that we perceive seems to me to be a special characteristic of humans only: for it is a rational soul which has the function of turning to itself (*to pros heautên epistreptikon*). It is also shown in this way that our rationality penetrates as far as sense perception, if it is the case that human sense perception is able to cognise itself. This is so because in a way what is perceiving cognises itself, when it cognises itself while it perceives. And for this reason it turns to (*epistrephein pros*) itself and belongs to itself, and its being separate from bodies already shows through more, insofar as every body having different parts of itself in different places would never be able to turn its attention (*sunneuein eis*) to itself. For this sort of activity is gathered together and becomes undivided, while every body is divided. Therefore our power of sense perception is rational.

[187,36] Indeed even the body itself is provided with organs in a rational way and, which is what Iamblichus says, ours is a power of sense perception in a different sense from the irrational power of sense perception, that is our power which turns to (*sunagesthai*) itself is sense perception in a

different sense from that which inclines (*neuein*) as a whole to the body. But it does not turn to itself like intellect or reason. For it is not able to cognise its substance or its power, nor on the whole is it stimulated by itself: it is cognitive only of its activity, and at the time when it is active. And it is active when it is being moved in some way by the sense object.

[188,3] Taking it as agreed that our perceiving that we see, and likewise that we hear, comes from our consciousness (*sunaisthêsis*), and so too in the case of the other senses, he [Aristotle] immediately shows that we do this not with some other sense but with that very sense with which we are perceiving, for example with sight that we see. For in this kind of consciousness (*sunaisthêsis*) 'the same sense is directed to seeing and to the colour that is its object [*DA* 425b13-14]', that is to a particular colour which is at this time the object of the sense of sight. From this he shows that it is neither reason which cognises this in its own right, nor any other sense. For reason is not in its own right capable of cognising individuals, nor is any other sense capable of cognising colour or light, because this is the special object of sight. So what cognises the sense that sees the particular colour as seeing is necessarily also what cognises the colour that is being seen.

[188,14] This is one proof, taken from the peculiar nature of each sense which is directed towards its special sensible and has its being in that. The other is derived from the argument to the absurd. For if it were another sense which cognises that sight sees, it follows reasonably that that one too would be cognised when it is in operation, as being in operation. If each of the five is so cognised, this will apply to a greater extent to that one which not only apprehends sensible objects but also the senses themselves. So this one too will be cognised by another, and that by another, so that an infinite regress will happen and this type of perception alongside another is abolished because nothing is the first, or there will be some sense which is itself able to cognise itself. But if this is so, the same capacity must be attributed to sight and each of the five, if in general any sense that exists is naturally able to apprehend itself. If it does so in so far as it is rational, then the first ones are rational too.

[188,25] And one could say in addition that the argument which posits other senses apart from the five is an artificial creation, both because of what has already been said, by which completeness was shown to be present in these ones, and because every sense is primarily something that perceives a sense object and not a sense. For if a sense happens to be perceiving a sense and also a sense object of which it is the sense, it will have a special sense object, like each of the five. What then? Is this to be granted to the sense that is known as the common sense as a special privilege? Perhaps the common sense alone cognises nothing at all, but operates alongside each of the five. And so, cognising sight and colour, with which sight is concerned, it will cognise them alongside sight. And so cognising itself is not an attribute of the common sense alone but of each

one, even if it belongs in a purer way to the common sense, since in its case being separate shows through more. HJB

(17) 'Simplicius' *in DA* 173,3-7

It is proper particularly to intellect, and in the second place to reason, to have the capacity to cognise itself, and to the life that is separate from bodies (because body, on account of its being divided with different parts of itself in different places, does not turn back to itself (*anepistrophon*)), so that it belongs to the kind of sense-perception that is like reason (*logoeidês*), if not quite, but is in a way free from any body. HJB

(vi) [*Epi*]*strephesthai*: confined to the rational, or extended to perception insofar as it is rational?

(18) Porphyry *Sentences* 41, pp. 52,7-53,5 Lamberz

That which has its being in another and has no essential existence on its own separate from another, if it turns to itself (*eis heauto strephesthai*) for the purpose of knowing itself, without taking account of that to which it owes its essential existence (*ousiôsthai*), in withdrawing itself from that, it destroys itself through separating itself from its being; for that which is able to know itself without that which it is in, withdrawing itself from it and being able to do this without encompassing its own destruction, can in no way owe its essence (*ousiôsthai*) to that from which it was able to turn itself to itself (*strephein heauto eis heauto*) without undergoing destruction, and to know itself without that.

[52,16] If it is the case with sight, and the sense faculties in general, that none is perceptive of itself, nor can it, if it separates itself from the body, grasp (*antilambanesthai*) itself, nor even survive, whereas intellect, when it separates itself from the body, then exercises its intellective function most of all, and turns towards itself and does not perish, it is obvious that the sense faculties have acquired their efficacy through the medium of the body. JD

(19) Alexander *in Sens.* 57,17-18

Either [the effluxes postulated by rival theories of vision] are juxtaposed to the eye, or they are travelling at the time when it turns its attention (*epistraphênai*) to them. RRKS

(20) Plotinus 5.3 [49] 6 (39-43)

That which is inactive (*mê praxis*) – for pure Intellect has no yearning for anything absent to it – turns back (*epistrophê*) on itself and shows that its self-knowledge is not only plausible but also necessary. For what else could

its life consist in, since it is divorced from all action and exists in thought. BF

(21) Proclus *in Tim.* 1.248,25-9

Opinion (*doxa*) has a knowledge [of sensibles] that is free from being passively affected. Perception partakes in a way of this passivity, yet also has a certain cognitivity, insofar as it is seated in the opiniative (*doxastikon*) [part of the soul] and is illuminated by that, and becomes like reason (*logoeidês*), although irrational in itself. RRKS

(vii) Damascius

(22) Damascius *in Phaed.* I, §269; §271-2 Westerink 160-4

§269 Why are we not aware (*ephistanein*), when recollecting (*anaminêkesthai*), that it *is* recollection? In the present life this awareness comes with recollection itself. – In the first place, even this is not always true (often recollection presents itself to us as newly acquired knowledge, since recollection comes about more easily than awareness of it; for the attention (*to prosektikon*) is apt to be diverted owing to its constantly varying direction, also because such awareness (*epistasis*) is attended with reversion (*epistrophê*) upon oneself, while all other knowledge seems to go straight to its object); and there is all the more reason why it should be different after that deep fall the soul has made. Thus sick people, too, sometimes forget what happened to them while in good health, but those in good health are certain to remember what happened during their illness.

§271 What is that which recollects that it is recollecting? – It is a faculty by itself beside all the others, which always acts as a kind of witness to some one of the others, as conscience (*suneidos*) to the appetitive faculties, as attention (*prosektikon*) to the cognitive ones. Therefore it is not surprising that we should recollect without being aware of (*ephistanein*) it, just as we sometimes read without being aware of the fact.

§272 Do irrational animals also have recollection? – If they forget a thing after having had a memory (*mnêmê*) of it and then get knowledge of it again, there is a renewal of memory, but no awareness (*ephistanein*) of it; for this is reserved for a soul that can revert (*epistrephein*) upon itself. LGW

(23) Damascius *in Phaed.* II, §21-2 Westerink 299

§21 Which is the capacity which recollects that there was a recollection? – Not the [intellect] which recollects the Forms, otherwise the one should always be with the other; recollection of the Forms would be right away simultaneous with recollection of the fact that there was a recollection. – Rather, this is peculiar to the attentive part (*prosektikon*).

§22 Do non-rational animals also have recollection? – That they have

memory (*mnêmê*) and that they can forget things is revealed by sense perception. Further, they are even capable of resuming the same customs after having forgotten, but they are not aware (*ephistanai*) of having recollected. PL

(viii) Augustine

(24) Augustine *Lib. Arb.* (*On Free Choice of the Will*) 2.4.10.41

Bodily things are sensed (*sentiri*) by a bodily sense. But it is not possible for a sense to be sensed by its very self. It is by the inner sense (*interior sensus*) that both are sensed, both the bodily things through (*per*) a bodily sense and the bodily sense itself. But it is by reason (*ratio*) that both all those things and reason itself come to be known and held in knowledge. RRKS

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4(d) Neoplatonist terminology drawn from Stoics

The Neoplatonists draw their terminology for self-awareness from the Stoics and especially from Epictetus. The Stoics had drawn special attention to self-interrogation for the purpose of moral improvement, rather than for the Neoplatonist project of reverting to one's source. Up to six terms were borrowed.

The first term was *sunaisthêsis, sunaisthanesthai*. The prefix *sun-* means *together*, and I have noticed three main uses. The term can be used of different perceivers perceiving together (so Aristotle *Eudemian Ethics* 1244b25ff. and 1245b20ff., references I owe to April Flakne, and, in connexion with different perceiving powers in a single person, Themistius *in DA* 118,14). Secondly, the term can be used of perceiving different qualities simultaneously.

Thirdly, the term was very commonly used for self-awareness by Plotinus and the commentators. It is contrasted with perception of externals as being of internals by Plotinus 4.4 [28] 24 (21-3) and Proclus *in Tim.* 2.83, line 23, Diehl (references I owe to Pauliina Remes, who credits Dirk Baltzly). Self-awareness is the commonest meaning in Alexander, Priscian (who may reflect Aristotle's successor Theophrastus) and the so-called 'Simplicius' (who may be Priscian), although there is more variety in other commentators, Themistius and Philoponus (Alexander *DA* 15,17; 65,9; *Quaestiones* 3.7; Alexander (?) *Mantissa* 130,23; 'Simplicius' *in DA* 7,20; 151,6; 188, 4 and 7 and 39; 189,24; Priscian *Metaphrasis of Theophrastus* 21,24; 22,4 and 14; Philoponus *in DA* 292,36-294,1).

The term had already been prominent in the Stoics, notably Hierocles (*Elements of Ethics*, ed. A.A. Long, *Corpus dei papiri filosofici greci e latini* 1, Florence 1992, col. 2, lines 3; 38). For them it represented an important theory of *oikeiôsis* according to which newborn animals and children already have an awareness of (*sunaisthêsis*) and affection for their own persons, which it would be natural to extend to others of their own kind. This knowledge of their own bodies and how to use them was not based on reason at one extreme, nor at the other extreme was it mere 'nature', i.e. instinctive behaviour. Rather it involved something in between: self-awareness.

The term appears earlier still in Aristotle, sometimes, as we have seen, for shared attention among different perceivers. But in the *Nicomachean Ethics* at 1170b4-5, Aristotle clearly uses it for self-awareness, and probably also a few lines later at b10, if awareness of the friend's existence in the course of living together and sharing words and thoughts flows from awareness of one's *own* activities as *shared*.

The last would not be the only disguised reference to self-awareness:

(i) The terms are used of perceiving darkness, of perceiving light dimly through the eyelids, of perceiving dimness and colourlessness and an absence of objects of touch. But, elaborating Aristotle *DA* 425b20-2, the commentators take it that these things are perceived through our (inner) awareness of our success or failure in trying to see or feel, Priscian *Metaphrasis of Theophrastus* 5,6; 'Simplicius' *in DA* 106,17; 135,3; 181,23; 189,27.

(ii) Alexander makes *sunaisthêsis* responsible for judging distance in hearing because distance is judged from the intensity of the (inner) blow, *DA* 50,18-19.

(iii) Alexander, commenting that different observers do not have *sunaisthêsis* of each other's sensibles, uses the word *sunaisthêsis, in Sens.* 163,12, precisely

because he is talking not of external sensibles, which they can perfectly well see in common, but of their (inner) perceptual experiences.

(iv) Philoponus *in DA* 20,20 uses the term of an (inner) sense of release from bodily burdens.

Sometimes there is an ambiguity because the reference could be to perceiving two qualities at the same time, or to the idea that such comparisons involve looking within oneself, or both. Plotinus, indeed, not only distinguishes *sunaisthêsis* as directed to internals, 4.4 [28] 24 (21-3), but also claims, too sweepingly, at 5.3 [49] 13 (21-2) (translated at **Logic and Metaphysics 13**(6)) that *sunaisthêsis always* comprehends a plurality of objects (references from Pauliina Remes). Both ideas, a plurality of objects and inward attention, may be combined in the following contexts:

(v) The term is used of perceiving things not only for what they are, but simultaneously (and possibly by looking within) as pleasant, harmful, good or true, 'Simplicius' *in DA* 211,11 and 13; Philoponus *in DA* 249,28; 259,33.

(vi) The thought may sometimes be that in order to compare a plurality of qualities, say, sweet with white or fragrant, one has to look within oneself at the different effects left within one by different sensations. Thus at *History of Animals* 534b18, Aristotle says that insects have *sunaisthêsis* of things like honey at a distance, and so need all the senses, not just taste, but e.g. smell. The use of the prefix *sun-* may combine the idea that insects perceive different qualities *together* and the idea that they perceive their effects *within* themselves. The same may be true of the pseudo-Aristotelian *On Things Heard* 803b36, which says that we lack *sunaisthêsis* of the gaps between rapid sound blows. Perhaps here too the power we lack is one of distinguishing within ourselves the discrete effects that have come together there (the last two references from Flakne, but with a different interpretation). Alexander *in Sens.* 36,12 similarly uses the term *sunaisthêsis* when he repeats Aristotle's point that we need a single faculty for different kinds of sense object if we are to compare and contrast them.

(vii) Philoponus uses *sunaisthêsis* for the sense of time (*in DA* 580,2ff.; 586,21ff.), probably because he thinks of it as involving not only the perception of events *together* with time, but also an awareness of inner changes, as required by Aristotle *Phys.* 4.11, 218b21-219a6.

Of a second term for self-awareness, *epistrephein*, Carlos Steel has pointed out to me that it is first used in the relevant sense by Epictetus, *Discourses* 3.22.38; see also 1.4.18; 3.16.15; 3.23.37; *Handbook* 10. The later Neoplatonist idea is that for self-knowledge something has to turn back into itself, which bodies cannot do (see above). The application to self-knowledge is in Plotinus, e.g. at 5.1 [10] 12 (5-14), mentioned above and translated under **3(f)** and 5.3 [49] 6 (39-43) translated in **4(c)**; see also **4(e)** 6.9 [9] 2 (35-6), and **15(b)**. Foucault (cited below), has emphasised dissimilarities rather than similarities of usage, 199-209; 443.

A third term 'attentive' (*prosektikon, prosokhê*) had become prominent among the Stoics, notably Epictetus, in connection with their practice of interrogating appearances when things appeared to them good or bad. Epictetus has a whole discourse *On Attending* (*Peri Prosokhês*), 4.12 (cf. *Handbook* 33.6; Plutarch *On Progress in Virtue* 83B; *On Garrulity* 514E). The Stoic Hierocles talks of attention (*prosokhê*), *Elements of Ethics*, papyrus col. 5, line 5, ed. A.A. Long, and attention is listed in earlier Stoicism as one of the subordinate goods, Stobaeus 2,73,4 Wachsmuth. The term *prosektikon* appears in fr. 177 (= Loeb 27) of Epictetus from Marcus Aurelius *Meditations* 11.37, and in a report about the Middle Platonist Atticus (contemporary with Marcus), although Proclus may in this report be employing his own terminology, *in Tim.* 2,306,1-2 Diehl.

A fourth term for self-awareness, *paratêrêsis*, is drawn from Epictetus 3.16.15 by Plotinus 4.4 [28] 8 (35 and 17-21), as shown by Pauliina Remes.

A fifth Neoplatonist term for self-awareness, *parakolouthein*, had been used by the Stoics, especially Epictetus, as Hahm has shown, for the self-attention required in questioning appearances, when things appear to you good or bad.

A sixth term, *suneidenai*, had been used by Plato, sometimes for consciousness of one's own defects, but was taken over by the Stoic Chrysippus (Diogenes Laertius 7.85) for the newborn's awareness of its physical constitution. The Stoic Epictetus echoes Plato's usage when he uses for something like conscience the terms *suneidenai, to suneidos* at 3.22.94; 3.23.15, and the noun *suneidêsis*, if fr. 97 is genuine.

On the whole, it was the Stoic terminology that the Neoplatonists took over, while the uses they put it to were new. For the Stoics have no inkling of the Neoplatonist idea that by reverting (*epistrephesthai*) to oneself, one reverts to one's source. But the idea that by reversion one can find metaphysical truths within is already in Epictetus 3.22.39, which is talking of preconceptions about the good. And Cicero is borrowing from Stoicism, when he says, *On Laws* 1.22.58, that we find natural law and justice within ourselves. Thus the ideas are partially, but only partially, inherited along with terminology.

Reading

Adolf Bonhöffer, *Epiktet und die Stoa*, Stuttgart 1890, 83.

April Flakne, 'Embodied and embedded: sunaisthesis, selfhood and friendship', in preparation.

Michel Foucault, *L'Herméneutique du sujet*, Paris 2001, 203-6.

David Hahm, 'A neglected Stoic argument for human responsibility', *Illinois Classical Studies* 17, 1992, 1-26.

A.C. Lloyd, 'Nosce teipsum and conscientia', *Archiv. Gesch. Philos.* 46, 1964, 188-200.

Pauliina Remes, *Plotinus' Philosophy of the Self: Unity, Reason and Awareness*, PhD diss., University of London 2001.

4(e) Knowing self through others

There is a theme in Plato's *Alcibiades 1* which is opposite to Descartes' assurance that one knows oneself, but can only make inferences to the minds of others. According to *Alcibiades 1*, the eye sees itself best by seeing its reflection in the eye of another, 132C-133C. This discussion seems to have influenced Aristotle *EN* 9.9, 1169b33-1170a4; pseudo-Aristotle *Magna Moralia* 2.15, 1213a10-26, and possibly *EE* 7.12, in their accounts of the value of friendship. The *Magna Moralia* repeats the idea of looking at a reflection. The point is that it is pleasant (*MM*; *EN*) to be aware of oneself. But it is difficult (*EN*), or impossible, as shown by (*MM*) our greater awareness of the faults of others. Since the friend is a second self (*MM*, cf. *EE*), in being aware of the friend one is aware of oneself. And this is all the more pleasant if the friend's actions are good, for then one sees good actions as one's own (*EN*). (*EE* 7.12 and *EN* 9.9, 1170a29-b11 probably rely on the different idea, considered so important in modern infant psychology, of shared attention (*sunaisthêsis*), recorded in **4(d)** above.)

Alcibiades 1, 133C goes further, though part may be an interpolation: the soul knows itself best by looking at its most divine part, wisdom, and at God himself.

Among Christians, Clement of Alexandria uses Plato's idea that we recognise ourselves by seeing mirrored in God our own divine element, and so also coming to recognise something of God. But Augustine rejects the Platonic idea. Incorporeal

things are not known by processes of mirroring. Nothing is more present to the soul than itself, *Trin.* 10.3.5. He thus seems to reinstate the more familiar primacy of self-knowledge over knowledge of others. Augustine's view at *Soliloquiae* 2.1.1 need not be different. In the succinct prayer there 'Let me know myself; let me know you' (*noverim me; noverim te*), Verbeke has argued that Augustine is treating knowledge of the self as the route to knowledge of God, not vice versa, as he does also in *Conf.* 7, citing Platonist books as his source, 7.10.16; 7.17.23; cf. 10.7.11; *Lib. Arb.* 2.14-16; *Trin.* 9-11; see **15(b)**.

Plotinus in a different way speaks as if moral beauty needs to be seen and loved first in another before one can take pleasure in it in oneself, 5.8 [31] 2 (38-43). Moreover, he explains at 5.1 [10] 1 (1-3) that in being ignorant of their Father, God, souls are ignorant of themselves, and goes on to compare ignorance of one's human father. The comparison is powerful, because people who do not know who their parents are, or who find they have been mistaken, feel that something of themselves is missing, and the feeling is not weakened even if the real parents are also shared by other siblings. When Plotinus adds that souls are portions (*moirai*) from God, I do not believe that he is going as far as saying that souls are parts of God, since he does not even wish them to be parts, in an ordinary sense, of the hypostasis Soul, see below **11(e)**.

Verbeke, who sees 5.1.1 (1-3) as influencing Augustine's *noverim me; noverim te*, takes both in the opposite sense, as implying knowledge of self as required for knowledge of God. But the context in Plotinus suggests a two-way relation. It is an illusion that separation from God will allow souls to belong to themselves. They are in fact disregarding themselves by failing to recognise God as their Father. At the same time, things also work in the opposite direction, for this disregard for themselves causes (*aitia*) their ignorance of God.

In 5.3 [49] 7 (1-9); 6.9 [9] 2 (35-6), Plotinus gives a Platonist reason namely that intellect's knowledge of its source is knowledge of itself, and that in turning back to its source, intellect is turning back to itself.

Iamblichus agrees with Plotinus that knowledge of ourselves is an accompaniment of knowledge of God.

(1) Plato *Alcibiades 1* 132E-133C

Socrates: Have you, then, noticed that when someone looks at an eye, [133A] his face appears, as if in a mirror, in the eye of the person opposite. We call this the pupil [*korê* is literally a girl] because it is an image (*eidôlon*) of the one looking.

Alcibiades: True.

Soc: So an eye would see itself when gazing at an eye and looking at that part of it which is best and with which it sees?

Alc: Apparently.

Soc: It would not see itself, if it looked at another part of a person or at anything else other than what it happens to resemble.

Alc: True.

Soc: So if an eye is to see itself, it has to look at an eye and at that place in the eye where we happen to find generated the excellence of the eye – and I presume that is sight?

Alc: Quite so.

Soc: Well then, dear Alcibiades, with a soul too, if it is to know itself, it must

look at a soul, and especially at that place in a soul where the excellence of a soul is generated, namely wisdom, and at anything else which this [part] happens to resemble.

Alc: So I think, Socrates.

Soc: Can we, then, say that any part of the soul is more divine than that involved in knowing and understanding.

Alc: No.

Soc: This part of the soul, then, resembles God, and anyone who looks at it and knows everything divine, God and understanding, would also most know himself.

Alc: Apparently.

[133C8ff. may be interpolated.]

Soc: So as mirrors are clearer and purer and brighter than the reflection in the eye, so God turns out to be purer and brighter than the best that is in our soul?

Alc: It looks like it Socrates.

Soc: So it is when looking at God that we would use that finest of reflectors, and among human things when looking at the soul's excellence, and that is how we would see and know ourselves most. RRKS

(2) Clement of Alexandria *Stromateis* 1.19, 94,4 *GCS* ed. Stählin, vol. 1, p. 60, lines 22-5

'For now we see through a glass' [*1 Cor.* 13,12], knowing ourselves by a reflection (*anaklasis*) on [God as mirror] and from the divine in us contemplating as far as possible the Creative Cause. For, he says, 'you have seen your brother; you have seen your God'. RRKS

(3) Augustine *On the Trinity* 10.3.5

But if the mind makes an image of itself as like what it is, then when it loves this image, it loves itself before it knows itself, because it gazes at something like itself. So it knows other minds from which it makes an image of itself, and is known to itself by the generic [likeness].

Why, then, when it knows other minds, does it not know itself, since nothing can be more present to the mind than itself? But if it is as with eyes of the body, which know other eyes better than they know themselves, let the mind then not seek, since it will not find. For eyes will never see themselves, except by mirrors. But let it not in any way be thought that anything like that can be applied to the contemplation of incorporeal things, in such a way that the mind knows itself as if in a mirror. RRKS

(4) Plotinus 5.8 [31] 2 (38-43)

It is truly a greater beauty than that when you see and love moral

judgment (*phronêsis*) in someone, not looking at his face, for that could be ugly, but leaving aside his entire outward form (*morphê*), you seek his inward beauty. If it does not yet move you to call such a man beautiful, you will not be pleased with beauty when you look inwards at yourself either. RRKS

(5) Plotinus 5.1 [10] 1 (1-17)

What is it, then, that has made souls forget their father, God, and be ignorant of themselves and him, even though they are apportioned (*moirai*) from there and wholly belong to him? The starting point of their evil was their audacity (*tolma*), their birth, the beginning of their otherness (*heterotês*) and their willing (*boulesthai*) to belong to themselves (*heautôn einai*).

Once they evidently enjoyed their self-determination (*autexousion*) and made use of extensive self-movement (*kineisthai par' hautôn*), having run in the opposite direction and greatly distanced (*apostasis*) themselves, they lost sight of the fact that they too came from that world. They are just like people snatched in childhood from their parents, who are unaware of themselves and their parents because of their lengthy upbringing away from them. So our souls no longer see either their father God or themselves (*heautas*); they disregard (*atiman*) themselves and regard everything else more highly than themselves through ignorance of their origin; they show admiration (*thaumazein*) and experience shock (*ekplêttesthai*) in relation to those things, infatuation and dependency, so that they have divorced themselves as far as they are able, disregarding what they have abandoned (*apostrephesthai*). As a result their regard for all this and their disregard for themselves (*heautôn*) has become the cause of their utter ignorance of him [God]. BF and RRKS

(6) Plotinus 5.3 [49] 7 (1-9)

But [the intellect] contemplates God, we might say. But if anyone admits that it knows God, he will be compelled by this to acknowledge that it knows itself too. For it will know all it has got from God and what God gave and what power God has. Learning and knowing this, it will know itself by this means too, since it is one of the things given by God, or rather it is all of the things given by God. So if it comes to know that being, learning of it by the powers it (*autou*) manifests, it will know itself, because it has come from there and brought what it can. RRKS

(7) Plotinus 6.9 [9] 2 (35-6)

For in turning back (*epistrephein*) on itself, [Intellect] turns back on its source. BF

(8) Iamblichus *Myst.* 10.1, p. 286, 10-12 Des Places

And with our knowledge of the gods goes our turning (*epistrophê*) to ourselves and our knowledge of ourselves. RRKS

Reading

E. Booth, 'St. Augustine's "notitia sui" related to Aristotle and the early Neoplatonists', *Augustiniana* 27, 1977, 70-132; 364-401; 28, 1978, 183-221; 29, 1979, 97-124.

J. Pépin, *Idées grecques sur l'homme et sur dieu*, Paris 1971, 192-3.

Gerard Verbeke, 'Connaissance de soi et connaissance de Dieu chez Saint Augustin', *Augustiniana* 4, 1954, 495-515, reprinted in his *D'Aristote à Thomas d'Aquin. Antécédents de la pensée moderne*, Leuven 1990, 367-87.

The theme is taken up in a different way by the Stoic Hierocles, *Elements of Ethics* 3.39-45. As pointed out by Brad Inwood, the newborn chick's knowledge of its own person involves knowledge of others, of the hawk which is dangerous for it and of the bull which is safe – judgments for which Avicenna was later to introduce the estimative faculty. But this is not, I think, knowledge of other minds, since the chick does not have to think of the hawk as a conscious being. Nonetheless, modern research supports the idea (Neisser, ed., with papers by Neisser, Tomasello, Trevarthen, Gustafson, Joplin). The human infant needs to see things in relation to itself, by six weeks its carer as responding to it conversationally, by two months movement as being in relation to itself, by fifteen weeks objects as being within grasp. This does not yet, any more than in Hierocles' chick, require anything as sophisticated as a *concept* of self. (On conceptless perception, see **1(a)** above.) But when such a concept arrives, it has been said to depend on infants from nine months seeing themselves as the target of others' attention. And it has been further said that each advance towards or in a concept of self depends on an advance towards or in a concept of other.

Reading

Brad Inwood, 'Hierocles: theory and argument in the second century AD', *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 2, 1984, 151-83.

Ulrich Neisser, ed., *The Perceived Self*, Cambridge 1993.

J.L. Bermudez, *The Paradox of Self-Consciousness*, Cambridge Mass. 1998.

In modern continental Philosophy, Husserl has argued that the social ego is formed only when we see ourselves through the eyes of another, and that another can see my body better than I do. Sartre, however, has denied the significance of seeing oneself through the eyes of another.

Reading

Dan Zahavi, *Self-Awareness and Alterity*, Evanston Illinois 1999, pp. 160-9.

G. Verbeke, 'Une anamnèse metaphysique chez Plotin', in D.O. O'Brien, M.O. Goulet-Cazé, eds, *Sophiês maiêtores 'Chercheurs de sagesse': Hommage à Jean Pépin*, Paris 1992, 297-316, at 297-9.

G. Verbeke, 'Connaissance de soi et connaissance de Dieu chez Saint Augustin', *Augustiniana* 4, 1954, 495-515 reprinted in his *D'Aristote à Thomas d'Aquin. Antécédents de la pensée moderne*, Leuven 1990, 367-87.

4(f) The soul's direct knowledge of itself: Cogito and Flying Man

It was seen under **4(a)** that Augustine stood Plotinus' puzzle on its head in *On the Trinity* 10.4.6. Puzzles would indeed arise, if the soul needed to seek itself. Part would have to seek part with paradoxical consequences (cf. Augustine's worries in *Confessions* 10.8.15; 10.16.25). But in fact the soul as a whole (*tota*) has knowledge. So since it knows itself as knowing, it knows itself as a whole. The part-part model is rejected again in *On the Trinity* 14.6.8.

The problem then becomes (and this is a decisive turn in Descartes' direction) how the soul ever makes a mistake about its own nature. This results from its relying on images of bodily things, 10.5.7-10.6.8; 10.10.16. The soul thrusts its love onto these images, but it should realise that it is actually more internal to itself than these images are, and it should (cf. Plotinus 1.6 [1] 5 (43); 1.6 [1] 9 (11); 4.7 [2] 10 (11)) shed the corporeal accretions which mislead it, 10.8.11. The Delphic command, 'Know thyself' can be obeyed because the soul is present to itself (10.9.12, similarly 10.3.5; 10.7.10; 10.10.16; Courcelle compares Porphyry *Sentences* 40, 49.10-11 Lamberz, *parôn paronti*), and knows itself as soon as it understands the command 10.9.12; 10.9.16, although it may then look in the wrong direction, 10.9.12, when it starts thinking (*cogitare*) instead of knowing (*nosse*), 10.5.7; 14.5.7-14.8.11. All the soul has to do in order to know itself is to revert to itself (*revocari conversione*, cf. Greek *epistrephesthai*, discussed under **4(c)**), 14.6.8. In fact, it never ceases to know itself, 10.8.11, at least by way of a sort of memory, even if not consciously, 14.6.8. Even infants have an implicit self-knowledge (*nosse*, cf. *notitia*) of themselves, 10.3.5; 14.5.7, but not yet, the last passage adds, self-thought (*cogitare*), and here Augustine speaks as if he had observed infants.

In 10.10.14-16, Augustine produces some of his many versions of the *Cogito* argument. First, doubt is impossible, because if you doubt, you are alive, think understand, want to resolve the doubt, know your ignorance, and so you cannot rightly doubt the existence of these mental operations, 10.10.14. Compare Descartes, *2nd Meditation*.

But now, just as in Descartes' *2nd Meditation*, the *Cogito* is put to a *second* use: a thing can only be known if its essence is known. So the soul knows with certainty not only these operations, but also its own essence. But it has no certainty whether it is air, fire or any other body, or bodily thing. So it is none of these, 10.10.16.

There are a good many other versions of the *Cogito* argument, including *On the Happy Life* 2.7-8; *Against the Academics* 3.9.19; *Soliloquies* 2.1; *On the Trinity* 15.11-12; *On Free Choice of the Will* 2.3 and *City of God* 11.26.

Not only does Porphyry probably give to Augustine and Avicenna the idea of soul being present to itself, but one of the passages already quoted above is also related to their arguments, as has been drawn to my attention by Ariela Tubert. For Porphyry maintains in the next chapter, *Sentences* 41, 52,11-16, that intellect, as opposed to the senses, cannot owe its essence (*ousiôsthai*) to body, because in turning to itself, it both knows itself and exists intact, in separation from body.

(1) Augustine *On the Trinity* 10.4.6 Mountain *CCL* 50

What, then, shall we say? That the soul knows (*nosse*) itself partly and partly not? But it is absurd to say that it as a whole (*tota*) does not know (*scire*) that which it knows. I am not saying 'it knows the whole (*totum*)', but 'it as a whole knows that which it knows'. So when it knows something about itself, which except as a whole (*tota*) it cannot do, it knows (*scire*)

itself as a whole (*totam*). But it knows that it knows something, and it cannot except as a whole (*tota*) know anything. So it knows itself as a whole (*totam*). RRKS

(2) Augustine *On the Trinity* 10.9.12

When the mind is told, 'Know (*cognoscere*) thyself', at the instant it understands what is said, 'thyself', it knows (*cognoscere*) itself, for no other reason than that it is present to (*praesens sibi*) itself. RRKS

(3) Porphyry *Sentences* 40, p. 49, 10-11 Lamberz

And if one takes one's stand in oneself, present to a self that is present to itself (*parôn paronti*), then one is present also to Being which is everywhere. JD

(4) Porphyry *Sentences* 41, pp. 52, 11-16 Lamberz

For that which is able to know itself without that which it is in, withdrawing itself from it and being able to do this without encompassing its own destruction, can in no way owe its essence (*ousiôsthai*) to that from which it was able to turn itself to itself without undergoing destruction, and to know itself without that. JD

(5) Augustine *On the Trinity* 14.6.8 Mountain *CCL* 50

It remains, then, that it is something belonging to the nature of the soul that it should view (*conspectus*) itself, and that it should be called back (*revocari*) to itself when it thinks itself, not as across a space, but by an incorporeal conversion (*conversio*). RRKS

(6) Augustine *On the Trinity* 14.5.7 Mountain *CCL* 50

Should we believe that [the infant's mind] knows (*nosse*) itself, but, being too intent on the things which it has begun to sense with the bodily senses, with pleasure all the greater for being new, while it cannot fail to know (*ignorare*) itself, is yet not able to think (*cogitare*) itself?

[A sign of the infant's soul being intent on sensibles]

If someone thoughtlessly, or in ignorance of the possible effect, places a nightlight where the infant is lying in a part [of the room] where its eyes can turn, as it lies, but its neck cannot bend, its gaze is so inseparable from [the light], that we have known several who have even become cross-eyed from this. RRKS

(7) Augustine *On the Trinity* 10.10.14 Mountain *CCL* 50

But who will doubt that he lives, remembers, understands, wills, thinks,

knows and judges? For even if he doubts, he lives. If he doubts where his doubt comes from, he remembers. If he doubts, he understands that he doubts. If he doubts, he wants to be certain. If he doubts, he thinks. If he doubts, he knows that he does not know. If he doubts, he judges that he ought not rashly to give assent. So whoever acquires a doubt from any source ought not to doubt any of these things whose non-existence would mean that he could not entertain doubt about anything. RRKS

(8) Augustine *On the Trinity* 10.10.16 Mountain *CCL* 50

In no way is anything rightly said to be known (*sciri*) so long as its essence (*substantia*) is not known (*ignorari*). Hence so long as the mind knows (*nosse*) itself, it knows (*nosse*) its essence and when it is certain (*certus*) about itself, it is certain about its essence. But it is certain about itself, as the points made above establish. It is not at all certain whether it is air or fire or any body, or anything bodily. So it is none of those things. RRKS

Reading

P. Agaësse, J. Moingt, eds, notes to *Oeuvres de Saint Augustin* 16, *La Trinité*, Books 9, 10, 14, in *Bibliothèque Augustinienne*.
E. Booth, 'St. Augustine's "*notitia sui*" related to Aristotle and the early Neoplatonists', *Augustiniana* 27, 1977-9, esp. 28, 1978, 183-221.
P. Courcelle, *Connais-toi toi-même*, Paris 1974, vol 1, 113-164.
É. Gilson, *Introduction à l'étude de saint Augustin*, 2nd ed., Paris 1943.
D.J. O'Meara, 'Scepticism and ineffability in Plotinus', *Phronesis* 45, 2000, 240-51.

The Islamic philosopher Avicenna (Ibn Sina, *c.* 980-1038) could not have known Augustine's Latin, but he offers a pointer, 'The Flying Man', with a similar purport to Augustine's last argument. In his *De Anima* (= *Shifâ, Healing,* Book 6, part 2) part 1, ch. 1, and part 5, ch. 7, ed. S. Van Riet, *Avicenna Latinus*.

Avicenna imagines a man who comes into existence moving through air or vacuum without perceiving anything, not even having his limbs touching. He would know directly that his essence [Hasse argues for the translation 'his essence' rather than 'he'] existed. but he would not know that body exists. Avicenna concludes that his essence, which he takes to be soul, is independent of body. There are further references to the Flying Man in Avicenna's *Ishârât* (*Remarks and Admonitions*) = *Livre des Directives et Remarques*, French tr. A.M. Goichon, Beirut, Paris 1951, in his *Masriqiyn* (*Easterners*), which exists only in manuscript and in his *Almahad* (*The Return* [sc. of the soul after death]), Latin only. The last was translated by Alpago (died 1522) and became available to Latin readers a hundred years before Descartes in the Venice edition of 1546, repr. Farnborough 1969. Avicenna further explains what he meant in *Reply to Bahmanyâr and al Kirmânî*, French tr. Jean Michot in *Le Muséon*, 2000.

In fact, Avicenna's discussion has so much in common with Augustine's *second* application of the *Cogito* in *Trin.* 10.10.16, to prove incorporeality, that I am inclined to wonder if there was not a common Greek source for at least some of their ideas. Avicenna has the same insistence on bodily things which are imagined (*yatakhayyalu*, Latin *imaginari*) not being part of one's essence (*dhâtihi*, Latin *essentia*), *Al-Shifâ* (*The Healing*): *Soul* 1.1 (Rahman 15,18-16, 17 = Avicenna *De Anima* 1.1, from the Latin of *Avicenna Latinus*, ed. S. Van Riet). In the same treatise (Rahman 259,6-9 = Van Riet 5.7), he insists that the soul is 'present to

itself' (*mawjûd*, same expression at Avicenna, *Book of Discussions*, Bidarfar p. 226, no. 675), and not absent (*ghayb*) from its own essence. The passage further points out that, because a thing cannot be absent from its own essence, it also cannot revert to it. This reminds us of Augustine saying in *On the Trinity* 14.6.8, just translated above, that reversion does not happen all the time, although Augustine, unlike Avicenna, allows that it can happen. Avicenna also gives a reason in his *Reply to Bahmanyâr*, paras 58-9, Michot, why the flying man must grasp his essence. It is that nothing grasps a thing without grasping its *own* essence. Augustine argues, admittedly differently, in *On the Trinity* 10.10.16 that nothing knows a thing without knowing *that thing's* essence. Avicenna stresses even more than Augustine that one knows oneself even when asleep or drunk, *Reply to Bahmanyâr*, Michot para 68; cf. *Ishârât*, ed. Dunyâ, vol. 4, p. 319. In the *Book of Discussions*, Bidarfar pp.185-6, no. 550, Avicenna allows that the intellect does not continuously intelligise (*'aqala*) its essence (*dhâtahu*), but insists that the soul has continuous consciousness (*shu'ûr*) of its existence (*wujûd*), and that when it [soul] intelligises, it has continuous consciousness of its intelligising.

What we seem to have here in Augustine and Avicenna is discussion of the same topics with divergent proposals about them. If they have a common source, it might be Porphyry (but see now O'Meara for Plotinus' influence on another aspect of the *Cogito*). We have already seen that the idea of being present to oneself is in Porphyry *Sentences* 40, 49, 10-11 Lamberz, and that Porphyry's next chapter introduces the idea that intellect's separation from body in self-awareness shows its essence to be non-bodily. Further, Jean Pépin has argued that the preceding book of *On the Trinity*, Book 9, borrows from Porphyry's fragmentary *Summikta Zetemata* the idea of soul and body being unified without fusion, but see Rist in **6(b)**. Avicenna also cites Porphyry in *Al-Shifâ: Soul* = *De Anima* 5.6 as the source for the view he rejects, that in thinking, the intellect becomes identical with its object.

(9) Avicenna, *Al-Shifâ (the Healing): Soul* I.1 (Rahman 15,18-16,17) from the Arabic (= *De Anima* 1.1, from Latin of Avicenna Latinus, ed. S. Van Riet)

The inquiry leads us to concern ourselves with grasping the quiddity (*mâhiyya*) of this thing that is called 'soul'. We must here indicate a way to affirm the existence (*wujûd*, Latin, *esse*) of our soul, with an affirmation that may serve as an admonition and reminder. This will be a pertinent indication for one who has the ability to observe the truth by himself, without needing to be instructed or rebuked, or averted from errors.

We say that one of us must imagine (*yatawahhamu*, Latin, *putare*) himself as if he were created all at once and as a whole, but with his sight covered so that he cannot see anything external, and created falling through the air or a vacuum, but falling in such a way that he encounters no air resistance nor anything else that would allow him to have any sensations, and with his limbs separated from one another so that they do not meet or touch. Then consider whether he will affirm the existence of his essence [or: of himself, *dhâtihi*, Latin *essentia*]. For he will not have any doubt in affirming existence for his essence, yet he will not along with this affirm [the existence of] the extremities of his limbs, nor his innards, his heart, his brain, or anything external to him. Instead, he will affirm [the existence of] his essence, without affirming that it has length, breadth or

depth. Nor, if in that state he were able to imagine (*yatakhayyalu*, Latin *imaginari*) there to be a hand or other body part, would he imagine (*yatakhayyalu*, Latin, *imaginari*) that it was a part of himself (*dhâtihi*), or a condition for his essence (*dhâtihi*, Latin, *essentia*).

You know that what is affirmed is different from what is not affirmed, and that what is grasped immediately [literally: 'what is near at hand'] is different from what is not so grasped. Therefore the essence (*dhât*, Latin *essentia*) whose existence is affirmed [by the Flying Man] is proper to him, insofar as it is his self (*'ayn*), not his body or his limbs, which he does not affirm. Thus he is admonished and has a way of being awake to the existence of his soul as something distinct from the body and immaterial, and he knows and is aware of it [sc. his soul]. But if he is oblivious of it, he will need to be rebuked. PSA

(10) Avicenna *Reply to Bahmanyâr and al-Kirmânî*, paras 58-9 Michot

What [the Flying Man] will then have grasped (*adraka*) is his essence (*dhâtuhu*), which he will then perceive (*shâ'ara bi*; same root as *shu'ûr*). Indeed there is nothing which grasps a thing without grasping its [own] essence (*dhâtahu*) as grasping. JM

(11) Avicenna *Al-Shifâ (the Healing): Soul*, V.7 (Rahman 259,6-9) from the Arabic (= *De Anima* 5.7, from Latin of *Avicenna Latinus*, ed. S. Van Riet)

One cannot say of the activities of the soul that the soul is absent (*ghayb*), because what is absent is present (*mawjûd*) to itself, but not to something else. But these activities are not existent (*mawjûda*) at all except when the soul is present to them. So it is not absent from them. A thing cannot be absent (*ghayb*) from its own essence (*dhât*), nor revert upon it. PSA

(12) Avicenna *Book of Discussions*, no. 550, pp. 185-6 Bidarfar

Our intellect does not intelligise (*'aqala*) its essence (*dhâtahu*) continuously (*dâ'iman*). However, our soul has a continuous (*dâ'im*) consciousness (*shu'ûr*) of its existence (*wujûd*). If it [soul] intelligises in actuality something other than its essence, it has a continuous (*dâ'im*) consciousness (*shu'ûr*) that it intelligises as long as it intelligises. JM

Reading

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4(f) The soul's direct knowledge of itself: Cogito and Flying Man

M. Marmura, 'Avicenna's "Flying Man" in context', *The Monist* 69, 1986, 383-95.
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5. Recollection and Concept Formation

5(a) Recollection

Anamimnêskesthai is better translated as being reminded and reminding oneself, rather than by the conventional rendering 'recollect', because this accounts not only for the middle and passive form of the verb, but also for Plato and Aristotle agreeing (Plato *Phaedo* 73C-75C; Aristotle *On Memory* ch. 2) that *anamnêsis* involves an association of ideas. It is distinct from memory, although it is a use of memory. Aristotle says that memory, even of objects of thought, is a function of the perceptual faculty, involving images, *On Memory* 1, 450a12-25. But *anamnêsis*, viewed as a deliberate search by association of ideas is too like reasoning to belong to non-rational animals, *On Memory* 2, 453a4-14.

Anamnêsis owes its chief importance to Plato's claim that even when we first, as babies, see or hear, we are reminded of universals like equality, which have not been given us in experience, and must have been known to our souls before we were born, *Phaedo* 75B-C. Plato already adumbrates the theory in the *Meno*. This was taken by the commentators as an account of how we have universal concepts. Types of *anamnêsis*, and objections to the theory, are discussed by Damascius. Augustine, though at first strongly attracted by the theory, denies it in his *Retractations*.

Recollection is acknowledged by Plotinus (see **12(e)** below). But it is needed only by the lower soul, not by the undescended soul which is uninterruptedly thinking the Forms. For Proclus' rejection of undescended soul and assertion of a certain recollection theory, see **3(e)**, **(f)** and **(i)**. Iamblichus at **3(i)**(3) above and Philoponus at **5(c)** below ascribe a version of recollection theory to Aristotle.

(1) Damascius *in Phaed.* I §270

Why are conscious (*epistaseis*) memories from former lives so rare? Because conscious perceptions of particular things are external as regards their objects and their origins, while those of universals arise from within and are our own and at the same time present themselves to our consciousness (*epistasia*) with a less strong shock (*aplêktoteros*) because they are familiar and not strange. Besides, those of universals are more numerous. LGW

(2) Damascius *in Phaed.* I §273

There are as many kinds of recollection as of knowledge: intellective (*noêros*), as in the *Phaedrus* [249B6-C6]; discursive, as in the *Meno* [81C5-D5]; and on the level of opinion, as in the case of those who recollect former lives. LGW

(3) Damascius *in Phaed.* I §293-6

Bion asked the question whether falsehood too is a result of recollection, as its opposite is, or not, pointing out the absurdity of this. The solution is that falsehood, too, owes its origin to a semblance of truth and that this semblance is something one would not take for the truth, if one did not know the truth somehow.

Strato [fr. 126] wondered why, if the theory of recollection holds, we do not acquire knowledge without proof, and how it is that nobody has ever learnt to play the flute or the cither without practice. In the first place, there have been self-taught men, such as Heraclitus, the Egyptian farmer, Phemius in Homer, the painter Agatharchus. In the second place, souls overcome by the torpor of genesis cannot be roused to recollection without a great effort; and therefore they need the support of sensible things.

Just as the imagination, starting from one name, can call up the story of a whole life, e.g. of Alcibiades, so rational memory, starting from any given point, can expand its knowledge. The union with the body is like an epileptic fit; there, too, the mind needs a long time to regain reference (*anapherein*) to its normal situation. LGW

Reading

Dominic Scott, *Recollection and Experience: Plato's Theory of Learning and its Successors*, Cambridge 1995.

Richard Sorabji, *Aristotle on Memory*, London 1972; 2nd ed. 2003.

L.G. Westerink, *The Greek Commentaries on Plato's Phaedo*, vol. 2, Damascius, notes ad loc.

5(b) Aristotle's theory of concept formation

Aristotle denies the pre-existence of our souls and so offers a rival theory of concept formation in *An. Post.* 2.19. On one reconstruction of 100a3-8, offered by Sorabji but not favoured by the commentators, Aristotle's idea could be illustrated by the case of the concept of an ox. Many memories of oxen constitute experience of oxen, and such experience *is* a rudimentary universal concept of an ox. Thus the rudimentary concept is empirically gained.

But Aristotle is interested in this work, as he immediately goes on to say, 100a8-9, in scientific concepts. The difference was illustrated in *An. Post.* 2.8, by the rudimentary concept of lunar eclipse as *some* sort of loss of light by the moon, as opposed to the scientific concept of it as a lunar loss of light due to the earth's shadow. It turns out at 100b5-12 that for a scientific concept of ox or lunar eclipse, we should need *nous*, which I have taken to be an intellectual *spotting* of the essence of lunar eclipse. Thus perception *and nous* are needed, but not Plato's recollection.

In the intervening lines, Aristotle offers a restatement, which again stresses the importance of perception by offering the uncharacteristic idea that perception is of the universal, even though, as he often claims, one perceives a particular. He adds that we form the concept of an ox before we form the concept of animal and that perception implants the 'first' concepts by induction, which is a kind of reasoning.

This interpretation takes Aristotle to be discussing the grasp of both universal

concepts and propositions alike, since to grasp the concept of an ox *is* to grasp a proposition, namely that an ox is a so-and-so. But it does not include the general run of scientific generalisations as does Themistius *in An. Post.* 63,15.

The commentators take everything differently. As regards empirical experience in 100a3-8, the interpretation above takes 'or' at 100a6, 'experience *or* the whole universal', to mean ' i.e.'. Eustratius in (4) below avoids the implications of this by interpreting as 'or rather', and 'Philoponus' in (2) by interpreting 'experience and the *sense-image* (*aisthêma*)'. Both make the universal something over and above the experience.

The commentators find Aristotle's empiricism instead in his suggestion that perception is of the universal, and some of them interpret this as a universal still confused with matter, and not fully separated. 'Philoponus' appeals to the view (see **Logic and Metaphysics 6**) that individuals consist of a bundle of distinguishing characteristics (long-haired, pale, etc.). When we perceive an individual it is not only these characteristics of the individual that leave a mark in our sense image, but also such characteristics as being a human, and a rational, mortal animal.

Reason is given a role soon after perception by the commentators. Perception transmits the information in the first instance to *phantasia*, and on, Eustratius adds, to reason (*logos*). Themistius and Eustratius insist that these universals (human, etc.) are not yet separated out by us and separately recognised but, as Aristotle says, *Phys.* 1.1, 184a22, are muddled together (*sunkekhumena*). The apprehension of the universal confused with the particular is necessary, Eustratius says, if the soul is to perform the process of conglomerating the universals from particular perceptions. The words for conglomerating in Themistius, Hermeias, Philoponus, Simplicius and Eustratius are *episunagein*, *sunageirein*, *sullegein*, *sunagesthai*, *athroizesthai*, for which see (5) below and **Logic and Metaphysics 5(c)**(8),(10-12). In (10) and (11), Hermeias *in Phaedr.* 171,8-25, and Philoponus *in Phys.* 12, 24-8, make our reason responsible for the assembling. Aristotle himself implies that reasoning plays a role, when he says at 100b2-4 that in concept formation we pass by induction (*epagôgê*) from a type of animal to animal in general.

Reason was thought of by the Neoplatonists as a faculty for step-by-step reasoning, different from intellect (*nous*), which contemplates without moving step-by-step (**(3)(a)** above). What happens when Aristotle gives a role in concept formation to intellect (*nous*) at 100b12-15? Themistius makes an (unconfused) grasp of the universal a function of intellect (*nous*), at *in An. Post.* 65,15-21 (not translated). But *nous* is not taken as above to be merely an intellectual spotting. The commentators take a huge step beyond Aristotle, by supposing that the intellects which play a role in the grasping of concepts are the material and the dispositional intellects, which they extract from Aristotle *On the Soul* 3.5, and the active intellect which is introduced by Aristotle there, but whose role is left by Aristotle quite unclear. The different opinions of Alexander, Themistius and 'Philoponus' on the role of these three intellects in concept formation are documented in **3(g)**(4-13) above.

There is one concession to empiricism, insofar as the lowest of the three kinds of intellect is identified, in a very un-Aristotelian way, with imagination. Thus Themistius *in DA* 98,35-99,10 identifies what he calls potential intellect with imagination as a storehouse of imprints that can be turned into concepts. And Philoponus *in DA* 5,38-6,4, 11,7-11, says that passive intellect, being the same as imagination, takes imprints from perceptible objects and possesses them within itself.

Reading

Richard Sorabji, 'Universals transformed', in Arindam Chakrabarti and Peter Strawson, eds, *Common Natures*, in preparation.

(1) Aristotle *An. Post.* 100a3-b12

Now memory (*mnêmê*) results from perception (*aisthêsis*), as we say, and experience (*empeiria*) [results] from many memories of the same thing, since memories that are many in number constitute a single experience. From experience, or (*ê*) from the whole universal (*katholou*) when it has become stable in the soul – the one beside the many, whatever is one identical thing in them all – [results] a principle (*arkhê*) of art (*tekhnê*) and scientific understanding (*epistêmê*): of art if [the subject in question] is in the realm of coming to be, and of scientific understanding if it is in the realm of what is. So the states are not [innate] in (*enuparkhein*) [animals] in a determinate form nor do they come from higher cognitive states (*gnôstikôteros*), but from perception, as happens when a rout has occurred in a battle, and when one man has stopped, another stops and then another, until it reaches the original position (*arkhê*). The soul is the kind of thing that can undergo this.

[100a14] But let us say again what was just said, but not said clearly. When one of the indiscriminables (*adiaphoros*) has stood still, the first universal is in the soul. (For to be sure one perceives the particular, but the perception is of the universal, for instance of man and not of Callias the man.) Again, a stand is made in these until the things that are without parts (*ameres*) and universal stand still: for example, first such and such an animal, and then animal, and also similarly here. So it is clear that we must come to know (*gnôrizein*) the primary things by induction (*epagôgê*); for that is how perception plants the universal in us too.

[100b5] Since some of the cognitive states (*hai peri tên dianoian hexeis*) with which we apprehend the truth are always true while others, like opinion (*doxa*) and calculation (*logismos*), admit falsity – while scientific understanding (*epistêmê*) and intellect (*nous*) are always true; and since no other kind is truer than scientific understanding except for intellect; and since first principles (*arkhai*) have higher cognitive status (*gnôrimôteros*) than demonstrations; and since all scientific understanding depends on a rational account (*logos*) – there cannot be scientific understanding of first principles. And since nothing except intellect can be truer than scientific understanding, it follows that the state that knows first principles is intellect. RMcK

(2) 'Philoponus' *in An. Post. 2*, 436,2-12

'Or [100a6]' should be understood as standing for 'and'. It goes like this: 'from experience and from the whole sense image (*aisthêma* [but Aristotle says 'from the whole universal']) when it has become stable in the soul' and settled there, comes knowledge (*gnôsis*) of 'the universal (*katholou*), the one

beside the many', i.e. which is something different besides the particulars (*merika*), which 'is one' universal 'in them', i.e. one and the same thing becomes manifest in all those particulars. Such a universal, which is on the one hand something different besides the particulars and on the other hand is observed in them, comes to be 'a principle (*arkhê*) of art (*tekhnê*) and scientific understanding (*epistêmê*).' If this universal is gathered together (*episunagein*) from things 'in the realm of generation (*genesis*),' i.e. things that are subject to generation and perishing, it is a first principle 'of art', but if it is 'in the realm of what is,' i.e. if it is gathered together from things that are always in the same way, i.e. eternal, it is a first principle 'of scientific understanding'. RMcK

(3) 'Philoponus' *in An. Post. 2*, 437,15-438,2

Perception acts upon certain particulars, which are undifferentiated in species, and then once and for all implants and imprints this sense image (*aisthêma*) in the imagination which not only bears the marks of certain distinctive (*idiotêtes*) and incidental features, of which the particulars consist (*sunistasthai*) and by which they are recognised, but also takes some mark from the universal. The universal is the common nature which all the particulars have in common. Sense perception sees Socrates and Alcibiades, and takes an impression not only of the particular distinctive qualities (*merika idiômata*) in them (the particular distinctive qualities are one man's being long-haired and pale, the other not), but also of one of the shared characteristics that it finds in them, that is, their being animals, or rational, or something of that sort. It then sends this along in the first instance to the imagination. When the first sense image is imprinted in the soul, it also creates in the soul a dim (*amudros*) knowledge of the universal. Similarly the second sense image and the third and the fourth, being alike, and possessing along with the distinctive (*idiômata*) and incidental qualities in the particulars something of the common features in them, get imprinted in the imagination too and also create in the soul knowledge of the universal. For sense perception grasps not only particulars (*merika*), that is, the accidental (*sumbebêkota*) and distinctive qualities (*idiotês*) of which the particulars consist (*ex hôn sunestêkasin*), but also the universal human, that is, some of the things of which the universal human consists (*sunistasthai*). RRKS

(4) Eustratius *in An. Post.* 264,10-13

He meant that 'from experience' (*empeiria*) [results] 'a first principle' (*arkhê*) 'of art (*tekhnê*) and scientific understanding (*epistêmê*)'. But since experience is something less complete and insufficient to serve as a first principle of art and science, he added 'or from the whole universal when it has become stable,' i.e. when it has come to a stand and is fixed and made firm in the soul. RMcK

(5) Eustratius *in An. Post.* 266,14-29

When Socrates is known perceptually, our perception simultaneously apprehends human, though it does not abstract (*aphairein*) human from the particular but confusedly (*sunkekhumenôs*) recognises (*gnôrizousa*) human too in the particular. And it is clear that it transmits this to the reason (*logos*) in the soul. (RMcK) For if perception did not recognise human at all, the soul would not be able to move through its own recognition to the apprehension and recognition of human and to conglomerate (*athroizein*) the universal in itself. But in fact this is what happens to it, so it perceives [human].

[266,20] And perception is in a way of what is common, even if not as common, but as particular. Or one might say that it is of the particular more as something common than as something particular. For if perception by itself were able to discriminate particulars from each other, it would have been thought to be of them as particulars. But as it is, it encounters them indiscriminately and recognises them confusedly. RRKS

[266,15] An indication (*sêmeion*) is that children call all men father and all women mother, since they operate (*enargein*) only on the level of perception and do not yet possess a disposition that can distinguish (*diakritikê hexis*) the distinctive features (*idiômata*) of each one. And so the perception that perceives Callias does not in virtue of its own capacity (*dunamis*) recognise (*gnôrizein*) him as Callias, but only as a human. RMcK

(6) Themistius *in An. Post.* 64,2-9

For when sense perception perceives Socrates, it simultaneously apprehends human, and when [it perceives] this particular white it simultaneously perceives white. For it does not perceive Callias and man together as entirely the same thing; [if it did,] it would not have called anything but Callias a man. But when it sees Socrates it also sees in him something that is similar and common to other people. And so perception is of the universal too in a way, but not in such a way as to separate it and abstract it and know (*gnônai*) it in its own right, but as confused with the particular and rather turned away towards it. RMcK

For the role assigned by Alexander, Themistius and 'Philoponus' to the material, dispositional and active intellects in concept formation, see **3(g)**(4-13) above.

5(c) Ascription to Aristotle of pre-nate concepts

The commentators in **5(b)** rightly ascribe to Aristotle a theory of concept formation that starts from perception, as expounded by Aristotle in *Posterior Analytics* 2.19. But Iamblichus is reported by 'Philoponus' *in DA 3*, 533,25-35, translated at **3(i)**(3) above, as ascribing to Aristotle a theory of pre-nate recollected concepts, and a similar interpretation of Aristotle is reported by 'Philoponus' as provided by Plutarch of Athens below in **5(c)**(1). 'Philoponus' disagrees with Plutarch here, and at

538,4-10, translated above at **3(g)**(13). he makes the human actual intellect inscribe imprints in the human potential intellect. But Philoponus in **5(c)**(2) below ascribes to Aristotle the view that the child's potential intellect has innate knowledge awaiting illumination, after having been suppressed by the process of birth into a state of third potentiality. The reference to suppression at birth suggests that the knowledge is pre-nate. Philoponus also endorses recollection theory in his prooemium to *in DA* at 5,16, with no suggestion that Aristotle thinks otherwise. Iamblichus and Philoponus both reinterpret Aristotle's comparison of the mind to a blank writing tablet at *DA* 3.4, 430a1.

(1) 'Philoponus' *in DA* 3, 520,1-12

Plato is the person who thinks that the intellect of children is dispositional and has rational accounts of things, not Aristotle. But Plutarch thinks that Aristotle too says this. How can he not be speaking falsely when Aristotle refutes him? He says [*DA* 3.4, 430a1] that the intellect of children is like a writing tablet on which nothing is written, because it is suitable (*epitêdeios*) for receiving the rational accounts of things but has not already actually received them. Alexander and Plutarch, then, err both severally and together. So now let us say what is true. It should be known that we are of the opinion that intellect is always form. For the intellect of children is form, potentially receptive of forms, and insofar as it is form it is not potential, as Alexander thinks, but insofar as it is potentially receptive of forms it does not have the rational accounts of things, as Plutarch thinks. WC

(2) Philoponus *in de Intellectu* pp. 36-40 Verbeke (*CLCAG*) *ms.* lines 70-43

He likens it to a tablet which has nothing written on it [Aristotle *DA* 3.4, 430a1]. Just as on an uninscribed sheet all those things which can be written on it are present in potentiality, on account of its suitability (*idoneitas*), but none of the things to be written is present in actuality before it is written, so too, the intellect, he says, is no intelligible thing in actuality, but all in potentiality. And just as something you write on when it is inscribed becomes a thing you write on in actuality, yet the form the sheet had before is not destroyed, so too the intellect when it becomes the things understood in actuality is in no way changed from its proper nature. If, in changing from potentiality to actuality, the intellect were affected to some extent and subverted from its proper nature, there would be occasion to feel a problem. But as it is, being likened to an uninscribed thing you write on, plainly it continues unaffected.

[37,81] We should notice here that in likening the rational soul to an uninscribed thing you write on, Aristotle places the forms of intelligible things in the soul according to the first sort of potentiality – I mean by virtue of a [mere] suitability [to receive them] – not, as Plato does, by way of disposition. That being so, he does not, like Plato, think the soul pre-exists [birth], for if it is pre-existent, it should possess concepts (*rationes*) dispositionally. But if it is not pre-existent, it must have had a

beginning to its existence. If it began to be, it is wholly necessary on the same account that it should have a limit. For everything which has a beginning in time has a limit in time. So from these premises the soul is shown to be mortal. Further, if from what has been said here it is shown that a rational soul is never pre-existent but always has a beginning to its existence, and if, furthermore, Aristotle wants the universe to be eternal, one of two things must follow. Either rational souls are immortal, in which case infinitely many of them exist and come to be; for the past and the future are both infinite; or else, if an infinity is impossible, they are mortal like everything else. In that case either the soul passes away into that which does not exist at all, if it is incorporeal; or it is resolved into matter, and then it is not incorporeal but a body.

[38,99] But to this it may be replied that we ought to interpret what Aristotle says here carefully and thoughtfully with regard to his whole thought and to what he says everywhere about the intellect. If we have shown a thousand times over, quoting Aristotelian texts, that he wants the rational soul to be separate and immortal, it is plain that even if he here likens it to an uninscribed thing we write on, he does not mean that it has forms in potentiality in the first sense (the sense in which semen is a man in potentiality). But a certain latitude (*latitudo*) must be recognised in both meanings of 'potentiality'. For we say that prime matter is in potentiality a man, and also the elements and semen and all the things which are in potentiality in the first sense, that is, by virtue of suitability; but they are not in potentiality in the same way but some are closer to the thing and some more remote. A similar latitude, then, must be recognised in connection with potentiality in the second sense, i.e. by way of disposition. Both the sleeping geometer and the one who is awake are said to be [one who knows] in potentiality, but the waking geometer is closer to the actuality; and the geometer who is asleep or drunk because he is held down by sleep or intoxication, resembles the man who does not have the disposition at all. So in the same way even if he says the soul resembles an uninscribed thing you write on, he calls it this because of the holding down of cognition by the passions which makes it seem as if it did not have forms at all. And when it has already become a knower he still calls it 'in potentiality'. For he says: 'When it becomes particular things as one who knows in actuality is said to [even then it is in potentiality in a way]' [Aristotle *DA* 3.4, 429b5-7].

[39,21] That he means it to be everlasting and immortal he has said plainly before more than once, and he now pronounces it to be separate from all matter. And a little later he again plainly says it is immortal. But these earlier words are sufficient: 'Concerning the intellect and the contemplative capacity the position is not yet clear; but this seems to be a different sort of soul, and it falls to this alone to be separated as that which is everlasting from that which is destructible [*DA* 2.2, 413b24]'. And later he says that just as the sun makes colours which are in potentiality, i.e. colours at night, to be colours in actuality [*DA* 3.5, 430a15-17], so intellect

which is in actuality, i.e. the teacher's intellect and the Divine Intellect, makes intellect in potentiality intellect in actuality.

[40,30] The Philosopher's meaning is plain from the model itself. Just as the rising sun does not provide existence for the colours, but makes manifest colours which exist there but are not evident, and does not make them to be colours (for they were just as much colours during the night), but makes them visible, so intellect which is in actuality perfects intellect which is in potentiality and brings it to actuality not by putting into it forms which are not there, but by bringing to light forms which are non-evident and hidden because of the state of swoon which is the effect of birth. And it is this that he calls 'potentiality' in the first sense. For there is a difference between the geometer who is in a cataleptic swoon though he still possesses [knowledge] dispositionally, or who is asleep, and one who is in none of these conditions but is not exercising the disposition; the one has both the disposition and the actuality hidden and is not capable of functioning; the other functions when he wants without being impeded by anything. The intellect which enters the world of becoming is like a person asleep or delirious. WC

Reading

Frans de Haas, 'Recollection and potentiality in Philoponus', in Kardaus, Spruyt, eds, *The Winged Chariot*, Leiden 1999.

5(d) The adoption of Plato's concepts alongside, or instead of, Aristotle's

For translations illustrating this subject, see **Logic and Metaphysics 5(c), 12(a), 12(b)**. The Neoplatonists often list Aristotelian empirically gained universal concepts as one type of universal, a universal posterior to, or 'after', the many particulars (Proclus *in Eucl. 1*, 50,16-51,9; Ammonius *in Isag.* 41,17-20; 42,10-21, citing Porphyry; Philoponus(?) *in An. Post.* 435,28-30; Simplicius *in Cat* 69,19-71,2; 82,35-83,20; cf. Porphyry *Isag.* 1,9-16). Not everyone who lists this kind of universal, endorses its existence. Neoplatonists tend to believe in Plato's innate concepts, either alongside, or instead of, the others.

In the case of geometrical concepts, Syrianus and Proclus mount an attack on Aristotle's empirically gained ones, which is reflected also in Simplicius and Olympiodorus (Syrianus *in Metaph.* 12,28-13,3; 95,13-17 and 29-36; Proclus *in Eucl. 1*, 12,9-13,27, Simplicius *in Phys.* 1075,4-20 and Olympiodorus *on Phaedo*, Lecture 12.1, lines 9-25). But the idea that we have both kinds of *logos*, opiniative (*doxastikos*) *logos* empirically gained in Aristotle's manner and scientific (*epistêmonikos*) due to recollection, is found earlier, in Middle Platonism in Alcinous *Didaskalikos* ch. 4, and the idea of opiniative reason is still found in the late Neoplatonist, Priscian, *Metaphrasis on Theophrastus* 19,9-13, both translated above in **1(a)**. In addition, Hermeias *in Phaedr.* 171,8-25 seems to endorse both kinds of concept, and Philoponus, who endorses Aristotle's, may also be approving Plato's at *in DA* 4,30-2, translated in **Logic and Metaphysics 9(b)**(2), and ascribing a version of the idea to Aristotle at *in de Intellectu* 39,99-40,43, translated in **5(c)**(2) above.

Aristotle's empirically gained concepts are expounded, or reflected, without

demur not only in the listing of universals 'after' the many particulars, but also in Philoponus *in Phys.* 12,24-8, and in the commentaries on Aristotle *An. Post.* 2.19 by Themistius, 'Philoponus' and Eustratius (translations at **5(b)**(3),(5),(6) above) and are presupposed in the *de Anima* commentaries of Themistius (translation at **3(g)**(16) above) and 'Philoponus' (translated at **5(c)**(1) above).

Mathematical concepts are a special case for Aristotle. He thinks that they are empirically gained through an additional process of abstraction, i.e. of ignoring the matter in which figures are embedded in the sensible world. The commentators sometimes use the same word, 'abstraction', for the quite different process of separation, which Aristotle applies to all concepts, when he holds, *DA* 3.8, 431b9-432a1, that the mind which thinks of a stone receives the form of a stone separated from its matter. See **5(e)** below.

Reading

Sten Ebbesen, 'Porphyry's legacy to logic: a reconstruction', in Richard Sorabji, ed., *Aristotle Transformed*, London & Ithaca, NY 1990.

Ian Mueller, 'Aristotle's doctrine of abstraction in the Commentators', in Richard Sorabji, ed., *Aristotle Transformed*, London & Ithaca, NY 1990.

David Sedley, 'Alcinous' epistemology', in Keimpe A. Algra, Pieter W. van der Horst, David T. Runia, eds, *Polyhistor: Studies Presented to Jaap Mansfeld*, Leiden 1996, 300-12.

Richard Sorabji, *Animal Minds and Human Morals*, London & Ithaca, NY 1993, 72-4.

6. Soul-Body

See also **12(b)** and **(c)** below.

6(a) The dependence of mental on bodily states

A major theme was the idea of a blend of hot, cold, fluid and dry ingredients in the body. Our word 'temperament' descends from the word for of a blend (*temperamentum*). The questions asked were whether the soul was identical with such a blend, and whether states of the soul 'follow' (*hepesthai*) the blend. On an opposing view, they neither follow from the blend, nor result (*apotelesma*) as something explained by the blend, but they may supervene (*epiginesthai*) on a blend. Plato's *Phaedo* makes Socrates reject Simmias' suggestion that the soul is merely an attunement (*harmonia*) of the body, like that of the strings of a lyre, or the blend (*krasis*) of hot, cold, fluid and dry in the body, on the grounds that the soul does not follow (*hepesthai*), but leads the body. Aristotle's objection is similar at *DA* 1.4, 407b34-408a5. Plotinus and Porphyry say that the soul is like a *harmonia*, now in the sense of tune rather than attunement, that moves the strings of itself. This is similar to Xenocrates' definition of soul as a self-moving number, as interpreted by Andronicus *ap.* Themistium *in DA* 32,19-31. It is a number because it is a *harmonia*, and self-moving as Plato said (7 below), which enables it to lead, not follow.

(1) Plato *Phaedo* 86B7-C2

We [sc. Simmias] positively believe that the soul is just this sort of thing: when our body has been strung taut and held together by the hot and the cold, the dry and the fluid, and things of that sort, our soul is the blend (*krasis*) and attunement (*harmonia*) of these very things, whenever they have been blended well against each other and in measure. VC

(2) Plato *Phaedo* 92E4-93A7

But, Simmias, how about this? [Socrates] said. Do you think it is characteristic of an attunement, or some other type of compound, to be disposed (*pôs ekhein*) differently than the things from which it is composed?

No way.

But then, I suppose, it does not do anything or undergo anything different from what they do or undergo. He agreed.

Then it is not characteristic of an attunement to lead whatever it happens to be compounded from, but to follow (*hepesthai*). He concurred. VC

(3) Plato *Phaedo* 94C3-7

But didn't we agree a short while ago that it [sc. the soul], as an attunement, would never produce melodies contrary to what is stretched, relaxed, struck and whatever other kind of effect is undergone by those things from which it is composed, but rather it must follow them and never lead? VC

(4) Plotinus 3.6 [26] 4 (41-52)

So the nature of the form (*eidos*) [a reference to the emotional part of the soul] must be an activity (*energeia*), and must produce by being present, as if the tune (*harmonia*) of itself [reading: *hautês*] were moving the strings. The emotional part of the soul (*to pathêtikon*) will then be the cause of emotion, whether the movement comes from it as a result of a perceptual appearance (*phantasia*), or even without appearance. It must be considered whether when this happens it is opinion (*doxa*) that starts things off from above. But the emotional part of the soul remains in the form of a tune. The causes of movement are analogous to the player, and the parts which receive the shocks (*plêttesthai*) from emotion might bear an analogy to the strings. For in that case too it is not the tune (*harmonia*) which has been affected, but the string. But the string would not be moved, even if the player wanted it, unless the tune said so. RRKS

(5) Porphyry *Sentences* 18 p. 9, 4-6 Lamberz

The soul is like a detached attunement that moves the strings of itself, strings that have an attunement attached [to body]. RRKS

Yet Plato and Aristotle do concede a certain dependence on body. For Plato in *Timaeus* and *Laws*, the soul, though imperceptible, makes movements which are, on the interpretation favoured here, literally spatial, despite the protestations to the contrary of the Neoplatonists, and this is why the soul is easily affected by movements of the body. Hence, for example, newborn babies, and humans when the race was first created, are prevented from reasoning properly by the physical movements involved in growth and perception, which interfere with the mathematically calibrated rotations (revolutions) of the soul. Babies are fidgety. They are calmed by rhythms and rocking by nurses, as the mentally disturbed can be healed by dance. Sound and hearing are both equally movements. The circling of the World Soul makes the visible stars go round. See *Timaeus* 36C-E; 40A; 41D-42A; 43A-44B; 67A-B; *Laws* 709D-791B. At *Timaeus* 44D and 91E-92A, the elongated heads of some animals show that the revolution of their soul has got out of the true circular form found in humans. See further below under **7**.

(6) Plato *Timaeus* 43A6-44C2

These [revolutions of the soul] confined in the strong river [of the body] neither conquered (*kratein*) nor were conquered, but were carried and carried by force, so that the whole creature was moved, in a disorderly and

irrational way wherever it chanced to advance with any of the six movements. For the movements went wandering forwards and backwards and again to right and left, down and up, in every one of the six directions. Though the waves which flooded in and flowed out as they provided nourishment (*trophê*) were large, greater still was the turmoil for each person created by the experience (*pathêmata*) of those objects which they came into contact with, when [43C] someone's body came upon and collided with alien external fire, or solid rock made from earth, or fluid and slippery waters, or was caught by a wind-storm borne by the air, and the motions produced by all this were carried through the body and came into contact with the soul. These motions taken altogether were on account of this thereafter called and still are now called sensations. Moreover at that time they caused for a while a lot of very great motion, and in conjunction with the continuously flowing [43D] stream stirred and vigorously shook the revolutions of the soul. The revolution of the same they altogether impeded by flowing in the opposite direction to it, and prevented it from ruling and going on its way; whilst the revolution of the different they shook so hard that the three intervals of the double and of the triple, as well as the mean terms consisting of the ratios of 3:2 and 4:3 and 9:8 that are the connecting bonds, though they could not be completely undone except by him who had created them, were nonetheless [43E] twisted round in every direction, and suffered every possible kind of fragmentation and deviation of their cycles. Thus they barely held together with one another, and were carried along, but irrationally so, sometimes in reverse, sometimes sideways (*plagias*), sometimes upside down. It was just like when someone stands upside down, pressing his head on the ground, and throwing his feet up against something. In this situation, for the one undergoing it and for the onlookers, the right-hand parts of each give the appearance of being left to the other, and vice-versa. The revolutions of the soul undergo the same and similar sorts of intense experience, [44A] and when they come upon some external object belonging to the genus of the same or the different, they announce that it is the same as something or different from something when the opposite is true, and so are proven false and foolish. At that time there is no revolution among them which rules or is leader. And when certain sensations carried in from the outside come into contact with the revolutions and drag even the whole vessel of the soul along with them, then these revolutions, though they appear to conquer (*kratein*), are in fact conquered. Indeed it is because of all these experiences that the soul today starts out foolish, [44B] when it is first bound into a mortal body. But then the flow of growth and nutrition diminishes, and the revolutions regain some calm and go along their own path and become more established as time passes; the revolutions are straightened out as each of their cycles takes on its natural form; and they announce both the same and the different correctly, thus making the person who possesses them become intelligent. So then if some right nurture of education (*trophê paideuseôs*) [44C] is recruited, the person becomes whole and entirely healthy, having escaped the worst sickness. RW, RRKS

(7) Plato *Timaeus* 67A7-B5

When we consider the third kind of sense perception, namely hearing, we must state what the causes are by which the effects associated with it come about. In general terms let us lay it down that sound is the blow which is passed up to the soul through the ears by the air, brain and blood; and that the motion caused by the blow, beginning in the head and ending round the seat of the liver, is hearing. RW

(8) Plato *Laws* 790D2-791B2

Athenian: Evidence of this [viz. of the utility of exercise] should be drawn from the following, namely that both young children's nurses and the women who effect treatments for Corybantic possession have adopted it and recognised it to be beneficial. For whenever mothers wish to put to sleep their sleepless children, they don't offer them rest but, on the contrary, motion; they continually rock them in their arms, and not in silence but with a melody, and simply lull them – just like the one who lulls the crazed bacchic revelries – using as their cure this dancing together with singing, which consists in motion.

Kleinias: So how do we explain this?

Ath: It is not at all difficult to understand.

Kl: How so?

Ath: Both conditions are, I suppose, cases of fright, and fright is due to a particular bad state of the soul. So whenever someone brings to bear on these conditions a disturbance from the outside, the motion from the outside conquers (*kratein*) the fearful and crazed motion that is within, and having conquered it, causes to appear in the soul, in each case, something altogether welcome: a restful calm from the troublesome pounding that was taking place in the area of the heart. In the one case it makes the children find sleep, and in the other, it brought about for us that those who are wide awake and dancing to the sound of the flute in the company of the gods to whom they offer propitious sacrifice, have sound dispositions in place of their manic states. Though briefly stated, this offers a persuasive account of the matter. RW

Aristotle equally describes in *DA* how the current state of the body can make us liable to, or impervious to, emotion. And in *Parts of Animals*, he links different blood textures in different animals to their emotional liabilities.

(9) Aristotle *DA* 1.1, 403a16-27

All the emotions (*pathê*) of the soul appear similarly to be accompanied by the body: anger, pacific feeling, fear, pity, boldness and again joy, and both loving and hating. For the body is affected along with these. This is indicated by the fact that sometimes we are not at all irritated or fright-

ened, even though clear and powerful troubles are befalling us, while at other times we are stirred by small and insignificant things, where the body is swollen and in the same state as when we are angry. Again, it is still more obvious that people get in the emotional state of a frightened person when nothing frightening is happening. If so, it is clear that emotions are principles embedded in matter (*logoi enuloi*), so that their definitions are, for example, like this: being angry is a certain change in a body of such and such a sort, or in a part, or a capacity of it, caused by this and serving this purpose. RRKS

(10) Aristotle *PA* 2.2, 648a2-13

The thicker and warmer the blood is, the more it makes for strength; if it tends to be thin and cold, it is conducive to sensation and intelligence. The same difference holds good with the counterpart of blood in other creatures: and thus we can explain why bees and other similar creatures are of a more intelligent nature than many animals that have blood in them; and among the latter class, why some (viz. those whose blood is cold and thin) are more intelligent than others. Best of all are those animals whose blood is hot and also thin and clear; they stand well both for courage and for intelligence. Consequently, too, the upper parts of the body have this pre-eminence over the lower parts; the male over the female; and the right side of the body over the left. ALP

(11) Aristotle *PA* 2.4, 650b14-651a8

Now some of the animals whose blood is watery have a specially subtle intelligence. This is due not to the coldness of their blood, but to its greater thinness and clarity, neither of which characteristics belongs to the earthy substance; and an animal which has the thinner and clearer sort of fluid in it has also a more mobile faculty of sensation. This is why, as I said before, some of the bloodless creatures have a more intelligent Soul than some of the blooded ones; e.g. the bee and the ants and such insects. Those, however, that have excessively watery blood are somewhat timorous. This is because water is congealed by cold; and coldness also accompanies fear; therefore in those creatures whose heart contains a predominantly watery blend, the way is already prepared for a timorous disposition. This, too, is why, generally speaking, the bloodless creatures are more timorous than the blooded ones and why they stand motionless when they are frightened and discharge their residues and (in some cases) change their colour. On the other side, there are the animals that have specially plentiful and thick fibres in their blood; these are of an earthier nature, and are of an irascible (*thumoeides*) temperament and liable to outbursts of anger (*thumos*). Anger produces heat; and solids, when they have been heated, give off more heat than fluids. So the fibres, which are solid and earthy, become as it were embers inside the blood and cause it to boil up when the fits of anger come

on. That is why bulls and boars are so liable to these fits of anger. Their blood is very fibrous; indeed, that of the bull is the quickest of all to congeal. But just as when the earthy matter is taken out of mud, the water which remains does not congeal; so when the fibres, which consist of earth, are taken out of the blood, it no longer congeals. ALP

Galen and Alexander took rival views, as explained by Victor Caston. Galen backed Simmias' view from Plato's *Phaedo* that the soul is a blend, or at least, *QAM* 44,5-8, that the mortal soul is: he cannot say whether Plato is right that there is also an immortal soul 36,12-16. Moreover, tendencies of the soul, both rational and emotional, follow (*hepesthai*) the blends in the body. He concedes that there is feedback (79,4-7), and that a quick temper in its turn affects the blend. But what he stresses is that physical factors, climate, diet, physiognomy, rhythm, gymnastics and music have a big influence. He praises the Stoic, Posidonius, for retaining Plato's view that there are irrational forces in the soul which respond to these physical factors, even though he leaves a role as well for the teaching of ethical philosophy and offers ethical advice elsewhere (*On the Diagnosis and Therapy of the Distinctive Passions of the Individual's Soul*). But it is only by acknowledging the irrational forces that we can see why a good education is not enough. And those Platonists are wrong who suggest that the body can only hinder the soul, not help it, although the suggestion is repeated below by Proclus. Recent prison research confirms the effects of diet on emotion.

(12) Galen *Quod animi mores* 32,1-13 (*scripta minora* 2)

That psychological capacities follow the blends in the body is something that I have not once or twice but very often tested and explored in many ways, not only on my own, but from the beginning together with my teachers and later with the best philosophers. I have found the proposition both true in every case and useful to those wanting psychological improvement. For as I spelt out in the treatise on habits, we produce a good blend through food and drink and daily activities and from this blend we will contribute to excellence for the soul, as the followers of Pythagoras and Plato and certain others of the ancients are said to have done. RRKS

(13) Galen *Quod animi mores* 44,12-20 (*scripta minora* 2)

I strongly commend the Peripatetic Andronicus [supplied from the Arabic translation] and endorse the man's judgement, for I find him like this in many other things too. For like a free man without obscure weaving of words he dared outright to declare the essence of soul a blend (*krasis*), or capacity (*dunamis*) of the body. In that he says it is either a blend or a capacity following (*hepesthai*) the blend, I criticize the addition of 'capacity'. RRKS

(14) Galen *Quod animi mores* 36,12-16 (*scripta minora* 2)

Of these forms (*eidê*) and parts of the entire soul, Plato appears to have been persuaded that the reasoning part (*to logistikon*) is immortal,

whereas I, in response to him, can maintain neither that it is nor that it is not. VH

(15) Galen *Quod animi mores* 44,6-8 (*scripta minora* 2)

And it is better to say, not that it [the mortal part of the soul] is enslaved [to the body], but that the mortal part of the soul is precisely this: the blend of the body. VH

(16) Galen *Quod animi mores* 79,4-7 (*scripta minora* 2)

Because of the hot blend, people become quick-tempered (*oxuthumoi*) and by their hot temper inflame once again the innate heat. RRKS

(17) Galen *Quod animi mores* 71,11-73,20 (*scripta minora* 2)

And indeed, if these things are so, it is clear that it is through the medium of our [bodily] blend (*krasis*) that the aforementioned activities of the soul are impaired when we drink wine, just as conversely they are assisted [in other cases]. But this, if you wish, I will instruct you in on another occasion, all the harmful and beneficial effects of wine that result from its heating [us]. For the moment though I will write out the passage in the *Timaeus* [87B] in which Plato, having first said 'in this way all of us who are bad become bad on account of two most involuntary factors. And for these the planters should always be blamed rather than the crop, and the nurturers than what is nurtured', goes on to say 'we must try, in whatever way anyone can, both through nurture (*trophê*) and through our practices (*epitêdeumata*) and studies (*mathêmata*) to flee from wickedness and acquire its opposite'. For just as 'practices and studies' remove wickedness and produce virtue, just so does 'nurture'.

[72,5] Nurture is sometimes spoken of with reference not only to that involving food but also to the whole regimen of children; but it is not possible to say that [Plato] now speaks of 'nurture' in the second sense. For it was exhorting not children but adults that he said 'we must try, in whatever way anyone can, both through nurture and through our practices and studies to flee from wickedness and acquire its opposite.' So by 'practices' he means those in gymnastics and music, and by 'studies' those in geometry and arithmetic. It is not possible to understand 'nurture' as anything other than that from [solid] food and porridge and drinks – which include wine, concerning which Plato expounded a great deal in the second book of the *Laws*. For whoever wants, apart from this, to know something about all the power there is in nourishment, it is possible to read <my three books about this and in addition as a fourth the one> *On Good and Bad Humours*, the one which is most necessary for us in the present context: for a bad state of the humours harms the activities of the soul in many ways, but a good one preserves them unimpaired. So this argument does not do

away with the fine results of philosophy, but guides and instructs [us towards them], even though to an extent it is unknown to some philosophers. For those who think that all human beings are capable of virtue and those who say that noone chooses justice in itself have both only half understood human nature. For neither are all naturally hostile to justice nor all friendly [to it]; and each group come to be like this on account of their bodily blends (*kraseis*). 'How then,' they say, 'could someone be justly praised or blamed or hated or loved, when he has become bad or good not because of himself but because of his blend, which he clearly derived from other causes?' 'Because,' we shall say, 'this is natural for all of us, to welcome and admit and love what is good, and to avoid what is evil, not considering whether it is innate or not.' RWS

(18) Galen *Quod animi mores* 64,19-65,1; 70,11-13 (*scripta minora* 2)

There are some people who call themselves Platonists, but think that, in sickness, the soul is impeded by the body, but that, when the body is healthy, [the soul] carries out (*energein*) its own activities without being either helped or hindered by the body; it is on account of these people that I shall cite some remarks of Plato [Galen here quotes Plato *Timaeus* 24C-D; *Laws* 747D-E; 666A-C; 674A-C] .... These remarks of Plato are said, not of bodies that are sick, but of those that are perfectly healthy .... VH

Galen even extends the influence of diet and climate to the intellect, going beyond Posidonius in this. It helps with ethical philosophy, intelligence and memory.

(19) Galen *Quod animi mores* 67,2-16 (*scripta minora* 2)

So now at least let those come to their senses who don't like the idea that food <can make (*ergazesthai*) people more sensible or more licentious>, more in command or less in command of themselves, bold or cowardly, mild and gentle or contentious and competitive. Let them come to me to learn what they should eat and what drink. For they will be greatly helped towards ethical philosophy and in addition they will progress towards excellence in the capacities of the rational part, by improving their intelligence (*sunetos*) and memory. Besides food and drink I shall also teach about winds and their blends (*kraseis*) in the environment, and about what locations one should choose and avoid. RRKS

Here Galen begins his praise of Posidonius as against other Stoics.

(20) Galen *Quod animi mores* 74,21-75,11 (*scripta minora* 2)

In this I am amazed at the Stoics thinking all humans are adapted for acquiring good character, but corrupted by their companions. To leave aside all other points that overthrow their theory, I will ask but one question. It

concerns the first humans to come into being who had no predecessor: from where or from whom did corruption come to them? They will not be able to say, and similarly in the present if they saw little children who were very bad, they would be unable to say who taught them to be bad, especially when there are many children quite opposite in their natures, but given the same nurture together by the same parents, or teachers, or minders. RRKS

(21) Galen *Quod animi mores* 76,7-12 (*scripta minora* 2)

These [oldest] philosophers saw children going wrong from the very beginning, even if they were educated in the very best way, and had no example of badness to look at, for it is really rare to see a blameless child. RRKS

(22) Galen *Quod animi mores* 77,17-78,2 (*scripta minora* 2)

Posidonius, the most scientific of all, also found fault with these very points in the Stoics, though in the very matters in which he deserves the greatest praise, he is not praised by the other Stoics. They persuaded themselves to abandon their country sooner than their theories, Posidonius the Stoic sect sooner than the truth. RRKS

(23) Galen *Quod animi mores* 78,8-19 (*scripta minora* 2)

It is not thought by Posidonius either that bad character enters humans from outside without having any root of its own in our souls from which it sets out and sprouts and grows. Quite the reverse, for the seed of bad character is in ourselves, and we all need not so much to avoid bad people as to seek people to purify us and prevent the growth of bad character in us. For it is not the case, as the Stoics say, that bad character in its entirety enters our souls from outside. Rather, bad humans get most of it from themselves, and what enters from outside is by far the lesser part. RRKS

In another work, Galen quotes extensively from Posidonius, who stresses not only the physical influences on emotions, but also the Platonic view [*Republic* 434D-441C] that there are irrational forces in what Posidonius calls the emotional (*pathêtikon*) part of the soul whose kinship is with domination or pleasure not with virtue. This explains what was otherwise inexplicable, why virtue is hard to inculcate, and shows that an irrational training is needed for these forces in the soul different from the rational training required by reason. Galen sees this as supporting his belief in the importance of physical influences for mental characteristics.

(24) Posidonius *ap.* Galenum *PHP* 5.5.3-14 De Lacy = fr. 169,8-55 Edelstein and Kidd

But these [facts] do not follow from the doctrines of Chrysippus or from the

view that there is no natural feeling of kinship (*oikeiôsis*) with pleasure or alienation (*allotriôsis*) from pain. For all children rush untaught toward pleasures and turn and flee from pains. And we see them angry, kicking, biting, wanting to win and get the better of their own kind, as some animals do, when no prize is offered beyond victory itself. Such behaviour as this is clearly observed in quail, cocks, partridges, the ichneumon, the asp, the crocodile, and thousands of others. In the same way children also appear to feel a kinship with pleasure and victory, and at some later time, as they grow older, they show that they have a certain natural kinship with moral excellence (*kalon*). Thus they are ashamed of their errors as they grow older, they take pleasure in morally excellent acts, they lay claim to justice and the other virtues, and they perform many acts in accordance with their notions of these virtues; but earlier, when they were still small, they lived by their emotions (*pathê*) and took no notice of the commands of reason.

[8] Thus there are these three things with which we feel a natural kinship, corresponding to each form of the soul's parts: pleasure, through the appetitive [form] (*epithumêtikon*); victory, through the irascible [form] (*thumoeides*); and what is morally excellent, through the rational [form] (*logistikon*). Epicurus saw only the kinship felt by the worst part of the soul, Chrysippus only that felt by the best, saying that we have a kinship only with what is morally excellent, which, he holds, is obviously also good. The ancient philosophers [sc. especially Plato] were the only ones who saw that we have a kinship with all three.

[9] Since Chrysippus omitted two of them, it is not surprising that he was perplexed about the origin of vice. He could not state its cause or the ways in which it comes to exist; and he could not discover how it is that children err. On all these points it was reasonable, I think, for Posidonius to censure and refute him. For if from the start children felt a kinship with moral excellence, their misconduct could not arise internally or from themselves, but would necessarily come to them only from the outside. But even though they are brought up in good habits and are given the education that they ought to have, yet they are invariably observed doing something wrong; and Chrysippus acknowledges this fact. To be sure, he could have ignored the obvious facts and have admitted only the conclusion that follows from his own suppositions; he could have claimed that if children are well trained, they will surely become wise men in due time. But he did not venture on this particular falsification of the facts; he granted that even if children were raised under the exclusive care of a philosopher and never saw or heard any example of vice, nevertheless they would not necessarily become philosophers. There are two causes [Chrysippus says] of their corruption; one arises in them from the conversation of the majority of men, the other from the very nature of the things [around them]. I have objections to both of these causes, beginning with that which arises from associations [with men]. PDL

(25) Posidonius *ap.* Galenum *PHP* 5.5.22-4 De Lacy = fr. 169,84-93 Edelstein and Kidd

Posidonius plausibly attaches to this discussion the observations of the physiognomist: men and animals that are broad-chested and warmer are all by nature more given to anger (*thumikôtera*), but those that have wide hips and are colder are more cowardly. And he says that in different localities men's characters exhibit no small differences in cowardice and daring, in love of pleasure and of toil, the supposition being that the emotional (*pathêtikos*) movements of the soul in every case follow the physical state, which is altered in no small degree by the blend (*krasis*) [of elements] in the environment. PDL

(26) Posidonius *ap.* Galenum *PHP* 5.5.29-35 De Lacy = fr. 31 (part) Edelstein and Kidd

For two things must be done: this latter part [i.e. reason] must acquire knowledge of the truth, and the emotional movements must be blunted by habituation to good practices, if one is to point to an improvement in the man's character. Thus from the start one should mould a human being with an eye to what is best, with forethought first of all for the very seed, then for the regimen that the pregnant mother will follow in food and drink, exercise and rest, sleep and waking, appetite (*epithumiai*) and anger (*thumoi*), and the like, all of which Plato discussed with the greatest exactness. But Chrysippus not only said nothing himself that was adequate; he did not even leave to any of his followers a starting point for the investigation, as he rested his argument on a faulty foundation. Posidonius censures him for this, while he admires what Plato said about the shaping of unborn children in the womb and about their rearing and training after birth; and in his first book *On the Emotions* he wrote a kind of epitome of Plato's remarks about children, how they must be reared and trained in order that the emotional and irrational part of their soul may exhibit due measure in its motions and obedience to the commands of reason. 'For this is the best training of children: preparation of the emotional part of the soul in such a way that it may be most amenable to the rule of the rational part.'

[34] At first [he says] this [rational part] is small and weak, but it acquires size and strength at about the fourteenth year, which is the proper time for it to take control and to rule, as a kind of charioteer, the team of horses conjoined with it, namely, appetite (*epithumia*) and anger (*thumos*), so long as they are not excessively strong or weak, sluggish or restive, or in general disobedient or disorderly or lawless, but ready to follow and obey reason in everything. The education and the virtue of the rational part itself [he says] is the knowledge of the nature of things just as the education and virtue of the charioteer is the knowledge of the rules of chariot-driving, for knowledge does not arise in the irrational powers of the soul any more

than it does in horses: the horses get their proper virtue from a kind of irrational habituation, the charioteers from rational instruction. PDL

(27) Posidonius *ap.* Galenum *PHP* 5.6.19-22 De Lacy = fr. 168 Edelstein and Kidd

'And', he says, 'when the cause of the emotions was recognised, it distinguished the methods of training.' We shall prescribe for some persons a regimen of rhythms and scales and exercises of such and such a sort, and for others another sort, as Plato taught us. We shall rear the dull and heavy and meek (*athumoi*) in high-pitched rhythms and in scales that move the soul forcibly and in exercises of the same kind; and we shall rear those who are too irascible (*thumikôteroi*) and who rush about too madly in the opposite kind. Why was it, in heaven's name – I shall address this question also to Chrysippus' followers – that when Damon the musician came upon a flute girl playing in the Phrygian mode to some young men who were overcome with wine and acting madly he told her to play in the Dorian mode, and the youths immediately dropped their wild behaviour? Obviously they are not taught anything by the music of the flute that changes the opinions of their rational faculty; but since the emotional part of the soul is irrational, they are aroused or calmed by means of irrational motions. For the irrational is helped and harmed by irrational things, the rational by knowledge and ignorance. PDL

Alexander replies that the soul is not a blend, but an efficacious capacity and (instead of following) it supervenes (*epiginesthai*) on bodily blends. He adds that attunement of the body would be more plausible as an account of *health*, a point repeated by Plotinus, 4.7 [2] 8[4] (10-16). But Alexander is willing to treat emotional outbursts and other mental states differently from the soul itself and he concedes that they are closely bound up with bodily states. The author of the first treatise in *Mantissa*, who may not be Alexander, also rejects at 104,22-4, the idea that the soul is a blend. The author of the next treatise reports at 112,5-113,2 but rejects, a more nuanced idea. On this view, the active intellect is always and everywhere thinking, but it becomes *ours* when the blend (112,14-16; 27-9) in our body provides a suitable instrument for it.

(28) Alexander *DA* 10,10-11

The soul, then, is the form of the body in an animal. RRKS

(29) Alexander *DA* 12,24-13,8

That the soul is the form of the body is also shown by the fact that changes corresponding to the soul also correspond to the preparedness of the body. For sometimes we are not affected at all, or only superficially and for a little, despite the strength of the external causes which can excite anger (*orgê*), fear, appetite (*epithumia*), or some other such emotion. At other

times, we are excessively impassioned (*pathê*), though the external factors are small and trifling. That is whenever the body is swollen and prepared and ready for emotion, either through some lack, or through surfeit, or through an [unblended] juxtaposition of humours. For we are more readily angry when bile is in excess, and we are often frightened or distressed at trifles through our body being disposed that way. RRKS

(30) Alexander *DA* 28,10-11

The soul is a natural entity, existing by nature, and is an arrangement of the capacities which it includes. RRKS

(31) Alexander *DA* 25,4-9

Health could more plausibly than the soul be called an attunement (*harmonia*), since it is closer to attunement than the soul. For health is a symmetry (*summetria*) of certain things, and that symmetry is a combination and mixture according to some ratio. But the soul is not the symmetry, but the capacity that arises upon (*epi*) the symmetry. It cannot exist without this symmetry, but it is not the symmetry. RRKS

(32) Alexander *DA* 26,20-2

[Speaking of the Stoic view that soul is a mixture of fire and air, of Epicurus' that it is a compound of atoms, and of Plato's in the *Timaeus*, that its essence comes from a combination of the circles of the Same and Different.] The soul would be an attunement more for people who speak like this than for someone who says that it is a state or capacity and form that supervenes on (*epiginesthai*) such and such a blend and mixture of the simple bodies. RRKS

(33) Alexander(?) *Mantissa* 112,14-16; 27-9

This instrument is called potential intellect, a capacity supervening on (*ginesthai epi*) such and such a blend (*krasis*) of bodies. ... In the same way the divine intellect, too, is always active – which is why it is in actuality – and it [is also active] through an instrument when, from the mixture (*sunkrisis*) of bodies and their satisfactory blending (*eukrasia*), an instrument of this sort comes to be. RWS

The author of *Mantissa* 104,28-34, who may not be Alexander, reverts from talk of supervening to talk of following, and of the blend being a cause (*aitia*). This is unlike Alexander and cannot be compared with Alexander's summary statement at *DA* 24,3-4 that the genesis of the soul is from (*ek*) the blend, since this is explained in the immediate vicinity in terms of supervening.

(34) Alexander(?) *Mantissa* 104,28-34

The body and its blend (*krasis*) are the cause (*aitia*) of the soul's coming-to-be in the first place. This is clear from the difference between living creatures in respect of their parts. For it is not the souls that fashion their shapes, but rather the different souls follow (*epakolouthein*) on the constitution (*sustasis*) of these being of such a sort, and change with them. For the actuality and that of which it is the actuality are correlatives. And that difference in soul follows (*hepesthai*) on a certain sort of blend of the body is shown also by wild animals, which have an [even] more different sort of soul deriving from the blend of their body being of a certain sort. RWS

Themistius, like the last passage from the *Mantissa*, is willing, when speaking of emotions, to say that they *follow* the blend of the body, and he treats emotion as more susceptible than perception to bodily blends, because the blend is not merely more or less good at impeding emotion, but actually arouses it.

(35) Themistius *in DA* 7,8-23

What reveals with particular clarity that these affections are common to the soul and the body is the fact that (i) sometimes animals encounter a cause sufficiently powerful to provoke them to anger (*orgê*) or to instill fear, without their becoming irritated (*paroxunesthai*) or afraid; whereas (ii) at other times, where the causes are slight and undefined, the animal is moved to excess, as where it lacks food, or is bothered by certain humours. This is especially manifest in the case of melancholy people who, although nothing frightening is happening, are often in states in which they are affected by emotions (*en tois pathesi*) like frightened people because of their bodily blend, and so they fear what is not frightening. All such emotions seem to follow the blends of the body, and to be intensified (*epiteinesthai*) and remitted (*aniesthai*) as the quality [of the blend] varies. The body does not obey such emotions like an organ, as the sense organs do the capacity for sense perception; instead, the body's affinity with the emotions is greater than that of the organs with the sense. For when these organs are in an unnatural state, they just impede the activities of perception, whereas a degenerate blend in the body, far from impeding emotions, arouses and intensifies them, since they are more closely attached to the nature of the body. RBT

With the Neoplatonists resistance begins, despite Plato's concessions, to acknowledging the power of body over soul. Plotinus concedes some role to blends, not an invincible one, in the case of lust and anger, and especially so in animals, where anger may *follow* blends, but he denies that blends can explain envy or jealousy.

(36) Plotinus 4.4 [28] 31 (39-43)

Even if you attributed differences of character to [hot and cold] correspond-

ing to bodily blends (*kraseis*), which are accounted for by the predominance of cold or heat, how could you relate jealousy (*phthonos*), envy (*zêlotupia*) and wickedness to them? BF

(37) Plotinus 3.1 [3] 8 (14-20)

The better [soul] will have more strength, the worse will have less. For the soul which yields to the bodily blend cannot help being subject to appetite (*epithumein*) or anger (*orgizesthai*), or feeling the abjection of poverty, or displaying the arrogance (*khaunos*) of wealth and the despotism of power. But the soul with the better nature bears up in the face of all these circumstances, changing them rather than being changed; so it alters some, and gives way to others if it can do so without vice. BF

(38) Plotinus 1.9 [16] (4-7)

How then is the body separated? When nothing in the soul is still bound to it, the body can no longer constrain it, since it has lost the attunement (*harmonia*) whose possession meant possession of the soul. BF

(39) Plotinus 4.4 [28] 28 (28-35)

But when readiness to anger (*orgê*) follows (*hepesthai*) the bodily dispositions, and when those with boiling blood and bile are ready for anger, while those who are said to be without bile and cool are relaxed in respect of anger, and animals get angry in relation to their blends [reading *kraseis*] and not in relation to the opinion (*dokein*) that they have been harmed, one might refer the anger again to the more corporeal side, and to what holds together the animal's constitution. RRKS

Plotinus, in passages translated below under **13(d)**, considers several views which would protect the soul from being affected by the body. Either it may be purified, so as to become unaffected (1.2 [19] 5-6). Or it is not affected at all, but simply initiates change in matter (3.6 [26] 4). But his final view is that it is only the undescended soul that is exempt from being affected by the body (1.8 [51] 4; 2.3 [52] 9; 1.1 [53] 1-7).

Porphyry holds that animals have reason (see below under **11(b)**) and (unlike Galen) that bodily differences cannot remove reason, but only make it less accessible (*prokheiron*). He also hints at the later view of Proclus, that the essence of the soul cannot be changed.

(40) Porphyry *Abstinence* 3.8.6

Aristotle says that animals with keener perceptions are more intelligent (*phronimôtera*). Bodily differences (*parallagê*) can make [creatures] easy or difficult to affect (*empathê, duspathê*), and can make them have reason more or less accessible (*prokheiron*); but they cannot change (*exallattein*)

the soul in its essence since they have not altered perceptions or experiences (*pathê*) or made them go away altogether. GC

Proclus goes to great lengths to reinterpret Plato's view that spatial movements in the body affect spatial movements of the soul. He comments in two works on Plato *Tim.* 43B-44B, cited by Galen and translated above, where fluidity in the bodies of the newly incarnated impedes the rational movements of the soul. The obvious spatial interpretation is acknowledged as at least part of the meaning earlier in the same century (the fifth century AD) in the Latin commentary of Calcidius, *in Tim.* 206. But Proclus reinterprets. For a start, he protests that the body can only hinder, not help, the soul, a view already ascribed to earlier Platonists and attacked by Galen *QAM* 64,19-65,1; 70,11-13, translated at **6(a)**(18) above and the body is said to hinder only like a chattering neighbour. Help comes not from the body, but from education (*paideia*) as Plato agrees (*paideusis*, *Tim.* 44B8-9). Proclus goes further: it is an illusion that the soul is disturbed. It merely, as it were, sees its reflection disturbed in the waters of the body and wrongly concludes it is itself disturbed. But its perfection and intelligence cannot depend on the blend of the body. Proclus *in Tim.* 3,341,4-342,2 (not translated) takes the sideways (*plagias*) and upside down movements, which *Tim.* 43E ascribes to newly incarnated souls, as if they were non-spatial movements, agreeing in this with a tradition to be recorded in the next section, **6(b)**, and stemming from Plotinus' teacher Ammonius Saccas. Finally, Proclus gives his own solution, that the powers and activities of the soul may be changed, but never its substance, a view already hinted at by Plotinus 3.6 [26] 3 (27-34), translated below under **13(d)**, by Porphyry *Abstinence* 3.8.6, translated just above, and found in Iamblichus *Myst.* 1.10,36,1-5, translated below in **14(b)**.

(41) Calcidius *in Tim.* 206, 224,1 Waszink

The child's soul is much more mobile and restless chiefly because of the irrational weakness of the mind when reason has not yet been made firm, but secondly because of the excessive heat and fluidity that abounds at that age. RRKS

(42) Proclus *in Tim.* 3.349,21-350,8

Galen would say that psychological capacities follow the blends in the body, and that the soul is thoughtless (*anous*) and unsettled, where the body is fluid and unsettled and flowing in every direction, but is straightened up and becomes reflective (*emphrôn*) where the body settles into a proportionate blend. How shall we concede that? It is not right to make the immortal soul, which exists before the body, think because of the body. Rather, we should say that the body sometimes becomes an obstacle to the soul's leading an orderly life, and sometimes gives less trouble. It is just as by living next to a silly, chattering neighbour, we would not be made more thoughtful because of him. But he is capable of interfering more or less with our having a peaceful life. That is how the complexion (*sunartêsis*) of the body sometimes disturbs the soul, and sometimes reduces (*aniêsi*) its hubbub, so that the soul gets some quiet. That soul is more in a natural state than the disturbed soul, but even it is not, until education (*paideia*)

is added to it. So the body can prevent reflective living, but cannot in any way produce it. RRKS

(43) Proclus *in Tim.* 3.330,9-331,1

It should not be thought on this account that the soul is affected. It is as if someone standing on a promontory made his image (*eidôlon*) and form (*morphê*) appear in a flowing river and kept his face unmoved, while the river by flowing changed his image in every sort of way. Thus it would show it now this way now that, sideways (*plagion*) [cf. *Tim.* 43E above] and upright maybe, and fragmented and continuous. Seeing this, he might, through unfamiliarity with the effect, think he was seeing himself being affected, though he was only seeing his shadow in the water, and thinking this, he might be pained, completely bewildered, shocked (*ekplêttesthai*) and frustrated. In the same way, the soul too in seeing its image in the body flowing in the river of coming to be and disposed now this way now that by effects (*pathê*) from within and incursions from without, though it itself is unaffected (*apathês*), thinks that it is being affected, because it does not know itself and thinks its image (*eidôlon*) is itself and is completely bewildered, shocked and perplexed. This effect recurs especially in newborn children and is found also in adults in dreams. For example, when one's natural organs are having trouble digesting food, one thinks in a dream that one is having trouble walking or carrying burdens, or being affected in some other such way. From this one can also see what the effects suffered by children are like. RRKS

(44) Proclus *in Tim.* 3.335,23-336,2

The soul has a three-fold arrangement within us, involving its substance (*ousia*), power and activity. Its substance remains entirely the same, *qua* substance and *qua* living and *qua* intellective. For, being an image (*eikôn*) of intellect it is intellective, just as the first image of soul is ensouled. But, as concerns its powers, in thought they are shackled, and in opinion they are tossed around, and since the powers are analogous to the lives, one of the lives is brought to a halt, while the other is shaken. For the substantial (*ousiôdês*) life is in perpetual motion, but, regarding the activities, those of thought get taken away from it, while those of opinion get distorted. And these [latter], being substitutes for the intellectual, obviously distract the soul from thinking. So its substance is both ever-living and ever-moving, but its powers and activities are of such a kind as to go astray both in life and in thought. HT

(45) Proclus *in Tim.* 3.338,6-13

But when they [the *logoi*] are stifled by oblivion and by the emotions (*pathê*) as sensation drags the soul down to material things, then, in their sub-

stance (*ousia*), they remain the same (for they are eternal, indissoluble and unchanging), but in their activity they take every twist and turn 'in every possible way', and in their power they succumb to every bending and change, again 'in every possible way' (for this is common to both), [yet] not on account of the circuit of the same – for there alone it is static. HT

(46) Proclus *in Tim.* 3.340,14-17

And these emotions (*pathê*) belong to the powers and activities of the soul, but its substance (*ousia*) is indissoluble, except, as [Plato] himself says, by the agency of him [the Demiurge, *Timaeus* 41A-B) who bound it together. HT

(47) Proclus *in Alc. 1*, 226,12-227,2 Westerink

Neither will we accept the arguments that say that the soul, when it arrives at a fluid body and is obstructed by this contact, so that at first it is deprived of intelligence, but when the fluidity evaporates because of the innate heat and becomes more commensurate, revives its thinking capacity. For this mode of perfection is bodily and entangled in matter and presupposes that the perfection of the soul follows the blends (*kraseis*) of the body. But the soul has its own existence prior to the elements and the entire process of generation; the soul is life unmixed with body and nature. JO

Philoponus allows, though Simplicius may deny (*in Phys.* 286,36-287,6: all soul is set apart, *exaireisthai*), that even reason is affected by the bodily disturbances in children, disturbances which Philoponus connects with *phantasia*. Philoponus also accepts that thinking is accompanied by bodily changes which we can recognise: drier bodies, signs of understanding.

Philoponus borrows from the Attic commentators, a term used by Alexandrians especially for the Athenian Neoplatonist commentators such as Proclus, though also including Alexander and Themistius (O. Immisch, '*Attikoi exêgêtai*', *Philologus* 1904, 31-40), another reply to Galen, that mental states cannot follow, or follow necessarily, from bodily blends, or philosophy could never counteract them, as it does. Such counteraction had been invoked by Socrates, according to Cicero *Tusc.* 4.37.80, *On Fate* 10 and Alexander *On Fate*, 171,11-16, when the physiognomist Zopyrus diagnosed him as naturally inclined to womanising and other vices. Philoponus' joke that 10,000 philosophisings would not stop you being pale may be compared with similar jokes recorded in **Physics** at *in Phys.* 641,13-642,20 (10,000 pairs of bellows) and *Opif.* 28,20-29,9 (angels trundling stars).

Philoponus also denies that mental states can be the result (*apotelesma*) of the bodily blend. But he concedes that the soul's capacities supervene on (*epigignesthai*) bodily blends, cf. also *in Phys.* 191,11-25. He distinguishes supervening on a suitable blend or quality, from following it, or being a result (*apotelesma*) of it. Following a blend was how the Aristotelian Andronicus had described the soul (Galen *Quod animi mores* 44,19, translated above). Alexander changed this to supervening on a blend (*DA* 26,20-2, translated above). Philoponus now transfers the idea of supervening from soul to its capacities. Moreover, he says that these

supervening capacities, like other forms, are bestowed on the blends by God, the Demiurge, *in Phys.* 191,11-16; *in GC* 197,7, whose creation is called universal (*holê*), because, unlike lower demiurgic powers, he creates universal things in a universal way (*holikôn holôs*), according to Proclus *in Tim.* 1.310,15-24, following Syrianus, translated in **Physics 8(e)**. See Jan Opsomer, 'Proclus on demiurgy and procession', in M.R.Wright, ed., *Essays on Plato's Timaeus*, London 2000, 113-43, at 119-23; cf. Iamblichus *Myst.* 292,5-9, translated below in **18(b)**.

(48) Alexander *On Fate* 6,171,11-16

At any rate, when Zopyrus the physiognomist said certain extraordinary things about the philosopher Socrates which were very far removed from his chosen manner of life, and was ridiculed for this by Socrates' associates, Socrates said that Zopyrus had not been at all mistaken; for he would have been like that as far as his nature was concerned, if he had not, through the discipline that comes from philosophy, become better than his nature. RWS

(49) Philoponus *in DA* 51,13-52,1

Hence the doctors have said that psychological capacities follow (*hepesthai*) the blends in the body. Against this the Attic commentators say that just as the doctors infer that the soul has the body as its substrate in which to inhere, on the grounds that such and such psychological impulses follow the blends in the body, so we can establish the opposite result from the opposite premise. For if the soul's inseparability from the body follows from its impulses following bodily blends, it will then be separable, if it does not follow these blends. Now we see that through philosophy even people with bad blends have not had corresponding impulses, but have overcome the blends. This would not have happened if their capacity had had the blend as a substrate in which to inhere. One cannot stop being pale, or sallow, or dark, which arises from (*ginesthai ek*) such and such a blend, even if one philosophises ten thousand times, until the blend is changed. Thus if such and such a psychological impulse happened as a result (*apotelesma*) of one's blend, it ought to have been quite impossible for a person to refrain from anger, if his blend was in the direction of anger (*thumikôteron*) and similarly for other cases. But as it is, that does not happen. So psychological impulses do not necessarily follow bodily blends. And the doctors themselves say this, for after saying that psychological capacities follow bodily blends, they add 'apart from philosophical ways of life (*diatribai*)'. So if philosophical ways of life can prevent psychological impulse following bodily blends, then there is something that is up to us, and they do not follow of necessity. And the being of impulses does not consist in the blend, for if it did, how would philosophical ways of life counteract emotions? From what would the truceless battle of reason and the passions arise? For nothing fights with the body that is its salvation, or strives to quarrel with its own cause. So if the blend were the cause of all psychological changes,

it would never fight against itself. It is opposites that fight each other. RRKS

(50) Philoponus *in DA* 439,33-440,3

But he means that the form is a rational account, namely, the form which supervenes (*epiginesthai*) on this sort of composition and proportion (*summetria*), and when this is destroyed, the form perishes too necessarily. The attunement of strings and the sensitive capacity in the proportion of the sense organs would differ in that the attunement *is* the proportion itself, which is destroyed by the excess and tightening of the strings, whereas perception is the capacity arising upon (*epi*) this type of proportion, which, even though it is distinct, perishes too when the proportion perishes. For it is *of that* and *in that*; for it is the form of this. VC

(51) Philoponus *in Phys.* 191,11-16

For according to Aristotle himself, forms do not come from blends, but come from outside and supervene (*epiginesthai*) on blends. For the blend of elements does not make the irrational soul, or kinds of life in general, given that it does not make the other forms either, I mean that of flesh, bone and suchlike. But coming from outside from the Demiurge's universal (*holê*, see narrative preceding **18(b)**(12) below) creation, and without existing previously, [the forms] supervene on the blends. RRKS

(52) Philoponus *in DA* 141,22-30

Aristotle has just criticised collectively all those who have spoken about the soul for saying nothing about the body that is to receive it. They should have done so, since it is not that a random soul enters a random body, but the body requires a suitability (*epitêdeiotês*) of a certain kind in order to receive the soul which is of a corresponding kind. For the blending (*krasis*) and the structure of the animals that are characterised by the spirited [part of the soul] (*thumoeides*) differ from those of the animals characterised by the appetitive [part] (*epithumêtikon*) and from those of the cowardly animals; and in general, both the blendings (*kraseis*) of the elements of the body and the equipment of the organs [of the body] stand in relation to the suitability of the activities of the soul [to them]. Having said these things, he now appropriately connects with this a view on the soul that follows from this. PJvdE

Philoponus exploits Alexander's talk of supervening also in his commentary *in GC* which we now know to be even closer to Alexander than was previously clear, thanks to the discovery by Emma Gannagé of part of Alexander's lost *in GC*, which is to appear in translation in the series *Ancient Commentators on Aristotle*. But when at *in GC* 169,4-27; 170,12-35, Philoponus appeals to supervening, following and being a result (*apotelesma*), the lines of demarcation are redrawn. Now even

physical properties like colour merely supervene on the suitability (*epitêdeiotês*) of a blend, and are not allowed to be an *apotelesma* of the blend. Yet they are allowed to follow (*hepesthai*), 169,17; 170,28, a particular proportion, or the suitability of a blend. Why, then, is a given colour no longer an *apotelesma* of a given blend? Because it is not explained by the blend, and that for two reasons. First, it emerges in 170,12-35 (translated in **Physics 21**) that it is a range or *platos* of blends, not a particular blend, that underlies a given colour. Secondly, matter does not explain, but only form, and form is bestowed on suitable blends of matter by God, the Creator (cf. *in Phys.* 191,11-16, translated just above, and 98,35-99,1).

(53) Philoponus *in GC* 169,4-27

The same absurdity would seem to follow both for those like the doctors who say that forms are results explained by (*apotelesmata*) blends and for those who say, as the correct account has it, that forms are not results explained by blends but, coming from outside from the Demiurge's universal (*holê*, see narrative preceding **18(b)**(12) below) creation, supervene (*epiginesthai*) on the suitability (*epitêdeiotês*) of the blend. For if forms were results explained by blends, since what follows (*hepesthai*) that sort of proportion in the primary blend, I mean in the blend of dry with fluid, and hot with cold ingredients, is a number of qualities (such-and-such a colour, flavour, softness, hardness, and the like), it is evidently clear that the thing will, in conformity with (*kata*) the same ratio, be sweet, red, fluid, hot, and so on. Hence if all these [qualities] exist in conformity with the same ratio, a thing that is qualified by one will be qualified also by the remainder. Thus if it is active in conformity with one [quality] and passive in conformity with another, it will then be passive and active in conformity with the same thing, since it is in conformity with the same ratio that it is both [cf. Plotinus 6.1.42 [20] (8-9)]. But if forms are not results explained by blends, but, coming from outside, follow (*hepesthai*) the suitability of blends, clearly the different qualities will have supervened on the blend in conformity with the same repeated suitability. But if different qualities have supervened in conformity with the same ratio of suitability the same absurdity will follow again, if it is active by one quality and passive by another, since it will be passive and active in conformity with the same thing. Thus the same absurdity has followed from the true account as well. It is worth seeking then, and it would be an enquiry in its own right, in what way the different forms either result from the same blend or, as the truer account has it, supervene on the same suitability, since it is clear in advance that the forms are not simply results of the blends. RRKS

Philoponus does, however, allow that a physiological change is involved when learning makes us less irascible, or leads us to understand something. The direction of causation is opposite to that chiefly emphasised by Galen (though Galen does recognise feedback, *QAM* 79,4-7), because the learning produces the physiological change, rather than physiological change helping learning. This qualifies the earlier claim that Philosophy can counteract the body: in doing so, it evidently acts via the body. The passage is remarkable in other ways too. First, it shows a

vivid appreciation of communication in the lecture room. Secondly, it is significant for our knowledge of other minds: it is the facial reflection of physiological changes which enables the lecturer to know if he has been understood. Thirdly, it emphasises the lecturer's influence over emotional character. Philoponus insists that thought warms the body also at *in DA* 332,12-17.

(54) Philoponus *in Phys.* 7, trans. from Arabic 771,21-772,3

Furthermore, those who frequently attend lectures on the disciplines of knowledge get lean and dry bodies, which results in their <not> easily becoming annoyed. Also, if there were not those alterations and affections connected with the body, we would not be able to explain the expressions in the face of someone showing that he has understood what we say and the other expressions showing that he has not understood us. PLk

(55) Philoponus *in DA* 332,12-17

It is as when the irascible (*thumoeidês*) capacity of the soul, which is not hot, is stirred. It warms the blood around the heart through and similarly too thought, which is an incorporeal activity of the soul, warms [us]. It is plausibly in this way that the sun, which is not hot, warms the air through by stirring the heat in it by means of its vital activity, which is light. RRKS

According to Damascius and Olympiodorus, natural virtues are the only virtues that depend on blends.

(56) Damascius *in Phaed.* I, §138 Westerink

First among virtues are the natural virtues, which we have in common with the animals and which are contaminated by the bodily blend and frequently clash with each other; either they belong mainly to the animate body, or they are reflexes of reason when not impeded by disorder in the blends (*duskrasia*), or they may be due to routine acquired in a previous life. Plato discusses them in the *Statesman* [306A5-308B9] and in the *Laws* [12, 963C3-E9]. LGW

(57) Olympiodorus *8th Lecture on Phaedo* §2, lines 2-7 Westerink

[The kinds of virtue] are five. Virtues are either (1) natural, resulting from our blend (*krasis*), or (2) virtues of character (*êthikai*), i.e. due to habituation. Natural virtues are especially proper to brute animals, as they are the outcome of a blend: all lions are constitutionally courageous and so is all their offspring (which cannot be said to hold true of us humans), all cattle are temperate, all sharks just, all cranes clever. LGW

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6(b) Soul non-spatially related to body

The fourth-century bishop Nemesius, in a passage of his *On the Nature of Man*, cites Porphyry's fragmentary set of treatises *Summikta Zêtêmata* (*Miscellaneous Researches*) along with Ammonius Saccas, Plotinus' teacher. It is maintained by Dörrie that the whole of Nemesius' passage draws on Porphyry's *Summikta Zêtêmata* and reflects a constituent treatise *On the Union of Soul and Body*. But Rist argues that the idea of unfused union is not drawn from Porphyry's *Summikta Zêtêmata* and does not go back to the genuine Ammonius Saccas, but to a fourth-century Christian Greek collection of sayings wrongly ascribed to Ammonius as if he were a Christian, excerpted by a certain Theodotus, and known to the Christian Eusebius, as well as to Nemesius.

Nemesius' passage first rules out any kind of mixture. Body and soul cannot be mutually blended, or each would lose its nature and perish, nor juxtaposed in microscopic portions, or some portions would be dead. (Wine and water are not strictly, *akribôs*, blended, because they can be re-separated. Plato is alleged to have treated the animal as a soul using the body as a garment (cf. *Gorg.* 523C-D; *Crat.* 403B; *Rep.* 620C) but how can a soul be one with its garment? We should therefore rather give the soul a non-spatial relation to the body. It is not in the body as a place, but rather in a relation (*skhesis*) to the body, and bound to the body only as a lover is bound by inclination (*rhopê*). If anything, one should say the body resides in (i.e. is dependent on) the soul, not the soul in the body.

A better comparison, 40.22ff. below, is with light in air (or air in light), except

that the soul is as a whole in every part of the body. Since the soul is an intelligible, it does not behave like spatial entities which enter into mixtures. An intelligible can be unified with a body, as Ammonius Saccas says, without being fused with it (*asunkhutôs*) and so losing its nature and perishing. (The passage here draws on the discussion of the soul not perishing at Plato *Phaedo* 102-5.) Porphyry repeats much of this non-spatial account in his *Sentences* and the non-spatiality (*inlocalitas*) of soul was an important theme in his *de Regressu Animae*, if Courcelle is right that that is reflected in the Church Father Claudianus Mamertus (died *c.* AD 474) *de Statu Animae*. But Claudianus might be following Porphyry's *Summikta Zêtêmata*, when he insists that the body is in the soul non-spatially (*inlocaliter*), *de Statu Animae* 2.3, 158,22, as Pépin points out.

The idea of bodies passing through one another without fusing (*asunkhutôs*) is applied to lights by Syrianus *in Metaph.* 85,15-28, translated below **8(d)**. Proclus *in Tim.* 2.254,13-14 repeats the application to lights in a passage discussed in **Logic and Metaphysics 18(c)** and translated in **Physics 20(e)**. Proclus compares with lights the circles of which the soul is made up in the *Timaeus*, which also do not fuse with each other.

Nemesius' non-spatial account derives from Plotinus among others, for Plotinus at 1.1 [53] 4 (14-16) compares the soul with light which is unaffected by what it passes through, and at 4.3 [27] 22 (1-9), compares the soul with light which stays still, while the air flows through it, and remains unmixed with the air, and is present without being present. As the air is in light, so the body is in soul, rather than soul in body. Plotinus derives the idea of the body in soul from Plato *Timaeus* 36D9-E3, where the world soul is placed outside (*exôthen*) its body. For Plotinus' reluctance to allow that in emotion the soul is affected by the body, see **13(d).**

Proclus interprets Plato's *Timaeus* 43A-E along similar lines. He takes Plato to be saying at 43A that soul and body preserve their own natures, unlike ingredients in a mixture. We saw in the preceding section **6(a)** that Proclus in the century after Nemesius also gives a non-spatial interpretation, at *in Tim.* 3.341,4-342,2 to the sideways and upside-down movements of the newly incarnated soul in *Timaeus* 43E (translated above).

Simplicius *in Phys.* 286,36-287,6 is inclined to extend the non-spatial relationship even to irrational and vegetative soul.

As a Christian bishop, Nemesius thinks Porphyry and Ammonius Saccas supply him with a good account of how God and man can be combined in the person of Christ. Pépin has pointed out that Augustine also uses the soul-body analogy as a model for the combination of God and man in Christ, *Letter* 137,11, and has argued that the ideas found in Nemesius on the relation of the soul to body are further applied to the Trinity by Augustine *On the Trinity* book 9 and Claudianus Mamertus, who uses the term 'without fusion' (*inconfusibiliter* at *de Statu Animae* 1.15, 59,20-60,16 translates *asunkhutôs* at Nemesius 40,12, etc. Morani). Augustine, Pépin argues, like Claudianus Mamertus, may be applying some of the ideas found in Nemesius directly to the soul-body relation in *de Immortalitate Animae*, *de Quantitate Animae*, *Gen Lit.* and in *Letter* 166 to Jerome, *CSEL* 44, including the question whether the body is like a wine skin (*uter*, *Quant. Anim.* 5.7; *Gen. Lit.* 8.21; cf. Porphyry's *askos* at 41,9). In the *Letter* to Jerome at p. 551,7-12, the soul is said to be extended through the body not by a spatial (*localis*, cf. Porphyry's *topikos*, 41,19-20) diffusion, but by a certain inclination (*intentio*, cf. Porphyry's *rhopê*, 41,17), and to be present as a whole everywhere (cf. 41,6-8).

In the next book of *On the Trinity*, at 10.10, Augustine uses his famous *Cogito* argument, later borrowed by Descartes, to argue against the view that the soul is a body, or an arrangement (*compago*, cf. *harmonia* in Plato's *Phaedo*), or blend (*temperatio*) of the body. For possible influence of Plotinus or Porphyry, see **4(f)**.

(1) Nemesius *On the Nature of Man 3*, 38,20-43,16 Morani

For body and soul must of necessity either be unified (*henousthai*), changed in quality together and both perish together, like the elements, or not be unified because of the difficulties previously stated, being juxtaposed with each other (*parakeisthai*) like chorusmen in a dance or pebble by pebble, or else be blended (*kekrasthai*) together like wine and water. But it has been proved in the chapter on the soul that the soul cannot be juxtaposed with the body; for only that portion of the body that was next to the soul would be animate, that not attached would be inanimate, in addition to the fact that things placed together like timbers, for example, or [39,5] iron or the like cannot be called 'one'. Also the blending of wine and water brings both to an end; for the blend is neither pure water nor wine. However, [in fact] a blend of this sort comes about by juxtaposition, which escapes perception because of the smallness of the parts of the things mixed, but is evident from the fact that they can be separated again from each other. For a sponge impregnated with olive oil raises [39,10] the water pure, as does papyrus, whereas it is altogether impossible to separate perceptibly things unified in the strict sense (*akribôs*).

But if they are neither unified nor juxtaposed, nor blended, what is the explanation of their being called one animal? So Plato because of this difficulty does not consider an animal to consist of soul and body but to be a soul that uses a body, and puts it on like a garment. But this explanation also contains a difficulty. [39,15] For how can a soul be one with its garment [*Gorg.* 523C-D; *Crat.* 403B; *Rep.* 620C]? For a tunic is not one with its wearer.

Ammonius [Saccas], the teacher of Plotinus, gave the following solution to the question; he said that intelligible things had such a nature as to be actually unified with things capable of receiving them, just like things which perish together with each other, but when unified to remain unfused (*asunkhuta*) and undestroyed, just like things [39,20] juxtaposed. For in the case of bodies, unification inevitably brings about the alteration of the ingredients, since they are transformed into other bodies, as are the elements into their compounds, foods into blood, and blood into flesh and the other parts of the body. But in the case of intelligible things unification occurs but change of quality does not follow with it. For intelligible things are not in their essence of a nature to change quality; either they withdraw or they perish into nothingness [cf. Plato *Phaedo* 103D-106E]; but they are impervious to change. But they do not perish into nothingness; if they did they would not be immortal. [40,5] Also, if the soul, which is life, were to be changed in a blend, it would change in quality and would not still be life. But what would it contribute to the body unless it provided it with life? Therefore the soul is not changed in quality in unification.

Now it has been shown that intelligible things are not qualitatively changed in their essence, it necessarily follows that even when they are unified, they do not perish together with the things with which they are

unified. [40,10] The soul is, then, unified, and is unified to the body without being fused with it (*asunkhutôs* [Claudianus Mamertus: *inconfusibiliter*]). Their being affected together (*sumpatheia*) shows that they are unified; for a living thing is affected as a whole, since it is one.

But it is clear that the soul also remains unfused from the fact that the soul is in a way separated from the body in sleep; it leaves the body lying like a corpse and merely breathes life into it lest it should perish [40,15] utterly, but in its dreams it is active on its own, foretelling the future and associating with things intelligible. The same thing happens also when the soul reviews some reality on its own; for then also it separates itself as far as possible from the body and comes to be alone, in order that it may thus fix its gaze on realities. For being incorporeal it has permeated the whole (*di' holou khôrein*) as do things [40,30] that have perished together with each other, while [however] remaining undestroyed and unfused, preserving its unity on its own and making the things in which it comes to be conform to its life while not conforming to them. For as the sun by its presence transforms the air into light, making it light in form, and light is unified with the air, diffused with it without being fused, in the same way the soul is unified with the body while remaining altogether unfused, differing only in that the sun, being a body and circumscribed by place is not everywhere where its light is, as is the same with fire. For fire remains confined [41,5] in the wood or in the wick, as being in a place. But the soul, being incorporeal and not circumscribed by place, goes as a whole through the whole (*holê di' holou khôrein*) of its own light and through the body, and there is no part to which it gives light in which it is not present as a whole. For it is not conquered (*kratein*) [Plato *Tim.* 43A6-7; 44A7; *Laws* 791A2] by the body, but itself conquers the body; it is not in the body as in a bucket or a wine skin (*askos*, Augustine: *uter*), but rather the body is in it [cf. Plotinus 4.3.22 (1-7)]. [41,10] For since things intelligible are not impeded by bodies, but go throughout the whole body (*dia pantos khôrein*), wander and pass through, they cannot be constricted by bodily place. Being intelligible, they are also in intelligible places, either within themselves or in superior intelligibles, as the soul is sometimes in itself, in discursive reasoning, sometimes in the intellect, in intellection. So when [41,15] it is said to be in a body it is not said to be in a body as in a place, but as in relation (*en skhesei*) to it and present (*pareinai*), as God is said to be in us. For as we say that the soul is bound by the body in its relationship and inclination (*rhopê*) and disposition (*diathesis*), so we say that the lover is bound by the beloved woman, neither bodily nor spatially (*topikôs*) but by their relation. For since it has no size [41,20] nor bulk, nor parts, it is superior to spatial circumscription. For by what sort of place can what has no part be circumscribed? For place exists together with bulk; for place is the limit of the container [Aristotle, *Phys.* 212a20], by which it contains the contained.

But if someone were to say: 'In that case my soul is in Alexandria and Rome and everywhere' he fails to see that he counts himself a place. For what is in Alexandria and generally in a certain place is place. But it is

absolutely not in place but in a relation. For it has been proved that it cannot be surrounded by a place. [42,5] So when an intelligible thing comes into relation with a place or an object in place, we rather incorrectly say that it is there because of its activity there, taking the place instead of the relation and the activity. One should say, 'It is active there', but does say, 'It is there'.

This account would fit more clearly and best with the account [42,10] of the union (*henôsis*) of God with man, in which, while united, He remained unfused and uncontained, but not in the way the soul is. For the soul, which is something pluralised, seems both to be affected with the body in a way through its affinity (*oikeiotês*) with it, and sometimes to conquer it, sometimes to be conquered [cf. Plato *Tim.* 43A at **6(a)**(6)]. But God, the Word, is not in any way himself changed in quality by communion (*koinônia*) with body and soul, nor does he share in their weakness, [42,15] but by giving them a share in his divinity he becomes one (*ginesthai hen*) with them while remaining one as he was before unification. This kind of blending or unification is more novel. He both is mingled (*kirnasthai*) and remains altogether unmixed (*amiktos*), unfused, undestroyed and unchanged, not affected with them but only acting with them, neither perishing with them and changed in quality with them, [42,20] but increasing them without being himself diminished by them, so that he remains immutable and unfused, since he is also purely without share in changes of quality.

Porphyry, who gave tongue against Christ, is a witness to this: the testimonies of enemies on our behalf are strong and permit no reply. Now this man Porphyry in the second book of his *Miscellaneous Researches* writes in these words, 'It is not to be denied that a certain entity can be received for the completion (*sumplêrôsis*) of another entity, and can be a part of its being while retaining its own [43,5] nature together with completing another entity, and, while becoming one (*hen ginesthai*) with another, can retain its own individuality (*to kath' heauton hen*), and moreover, while itself untransmuted (*mê trepesthai*), can transmute those things into which it comes so that they gain its activity by its presence (*parousia*).' He says this about the unification of soul and body. But if this account is true of the soul because it is incorporeal [43,10], still more is it so in the account of God who is more unfused and truly incorporeal. This directly stops the mouths of those who try to attack the unification of God with man. For the majority of pagans make this an object of derision, saying that it is impossible, implausible and unseemly that the divine should come together with the mortal nature by [43,15] blending and unification. But we make use of their own reputable witnesses and shrug off the accusation. JOU

(2) Plotinus 1.1 [53] 4 (14-16)

What is interwoven [the weft, cf. Plato *Tim.* 36E2] can remain unaffected

(*apathês*), and the soul, however much it passes through the body, need not suffer what affects the body – just like light. BF

(3) Plotinus 4.3 [27] 22 (1-9)

Should it then be said that when the soul is present (*pareinai*) to the body, it is present as fire is present in air? For this too is present without being present, and is present throughout the whole (*di' holou*), but is not mixed (*mignunai*) with anything, and stays itself, while the air flows past. And when the air comes to be outside the region in which the light is, it departs without keeping any light, but as long as it is under the light, it is illuminated. So it is right to say here too that the air is in the light, rather than the light in the air. And that is why Plato himself rightly does not put soul in body in the case of the World Soul, but body in soul [*Tim.* 36D9-E3]. RRKS

(4) Porphyry *Sentences* 3 Lamberz

Things in themselves incorporeal, not being present spatially (*topikôs*) to bodies, are present to them whenever they wish, inclining (*rhêpein*) towards them in the mode of inclination proper to them; and, since they are not spatially (*topikôs*) present to them, that means that their presence to them is by relation (*têi skhesei pareinai*). JD

(5) Porphyry *Sentences* 27 Lamberz 16,5-6; 11-13

It is not spatially (*topikôs*) that the incorporeal [reference is to soul] penetrates where it wishes .... RRKS

It is therefore by reason of a certain sort of disposition (*diathesis*) that it is to be found where it is, because, as regards spatial location, it is everywhere and nowhere. JD

(6) Porphyry *Sentences* 31 Lamberz 21,2

Soul is everywhere because it is nowhere. JD

(7) Plato *Timaeus* 43A6-7

The circuits (*periodoi*) [of the soul], confined in the strong river [of the body] neither conquered (*kratein*), nor were conquered. RRKS

(8) Proclus *in Tim.* 3.326,9-12

The 'neither conquered nor were conquered' is the fact that each of the two things that come together still preserves its own nature. For the concourse

of soul and body is not like the case of things blended to mutual destruction. RRKS

(9) Simplicius *in Phys.* 286,36-287,6

How then did Aristotle present the difference between [nature] and soul? I think that the phrase 'in which it resides' [Aristotle's description of nature, *Phys.* 2.1, 192b22] is sufficient in this respect, and the following clearer phrase 'in a substrate' refers to nature. For all soul, because it properly has the power of moving, is set apart (*exaireisthai*) from what is moved. If this does not satisfy those who consider that the vegetative and irrational parts of the soul reside in bodies as substrates, then at any rate the following will satisfy them. BF

(10) Augustine *Letter 166* (*On the Origins of the Human Soul to Jerome*) ch. 2.4, Goldbacher, *CSEL* 44, p. 551, 7-12

The soul reaches through the whole body that it animates, to be sure, not by a spatial (*localis*) diffusion, but by a certain vital inclination (*intentio*). For it is present as a whole through all the body's little parts, not less in the smaller ones and more in the bigger ones, but in one place more intensely (*intentius*), in another more restrictedly (*remissius*), yet in all and in each it is present as a whole. RRKS

(11) Augustine *On the Trinity 10.10* (15-16), Mountain *CCL* 50

Close to this is the opinion of those who deny that the mind itself is a body, but who think it is an arrangement (*compago*) or blend (*temperatio*) of body. ... They all fail to notice that the mind knows itself (*nosse se*) when it seeks itself, as we have shown. But in no way is anything rightly said to be known (*sciri*), so long as its essence is not known (*ignorari*). ... RRKS

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6(c) Incarnation and reincarnation: how bodies are made

Plotinus seems to have two stories. On one story, there is a body akin to the soul awaiting its reincarnation.

(1) Plotinus 4.3 [27] 12 (37-8)

Each soul descends to a body ready to receive it through similarity (*kath' homoiôsin*) of condition. BF

This fits with the idea that it is the rational forming principles (*logoi*) in the souls of the parents that produce the body.

(2) Plotinus 5.7 [18] 2 (1-8)

But if it is the mixtures (*mixeis*) of the rational forming principles of the male and female that gives the offspring their differing characteristics, then there will not be a particular rational forming principle of each child, and it will be one of the parents, for example the male, who produces the child not in accordance with differing rational forming principles but in accordance with one of his own or his father's. The answer is that nothing prevents parents from producing children with differing characteristics, since they contain all the rational forming principles, of which some are to hand (*prokheiroi*) at any one time.

What about differences in children from the same parents? Well, they are due to unequal predominance (*epikratêsis*). BF

Also relevant to the first story of a pre-prepared body is Porphyry, *ad Gaurum* 6.1, quoted above under **2(h)**. Since daemons and ghosts can imprint their *phantasiai* on their pneumatic vehicles, why should not the soul in human seed shape the embryo in accordance with its *phantasiai*?

The other account applies especially to reincarnation of a human as an animal, and gives an influence to the previous life of the soul in determining what sort of animal the human will become.

(3) Plotinus 3.4 [15] 2 (16-30)

All those that have cherished the human in them become men again. Those that have lived purely by their senses (*aisthêsis*) become animals. If their senses have been combined with anger (*thumos*), then they become wild animals; differences among men of this kind account for the different species of beast they become. Those who lived with appetite (*epithumia*) and the pleasure of appetite become intemperate and greedy animals. If they lived not by their senses with passions, but by a sluggishness of sense with passions they even become plants; for such, or mainly such, is the behaviour of plants, and these men have made it their concern to become like trees – root and branch! Those that have been obsessed by music but

have been otherwise pure become songbirds. Kings whose only vice has been irrationality become eagles. Those who speculate about the heavens. forever building castles in the air, become birds that soar aloft. Those who practise civic virtues become men again, while those whose participation in civic virtues is inferior become social creatures such as bees. BF

(4) Plotinus 4.3 [27] 8 (6-10)

It should now be briefly stated that differences might occur not only because of bodily constraints but also in behaviour, and (less so) in the activities of the reasoning faculty, and as a result of previous lives. For Plato says that the souls make their choices in accordance with their previous lives. BF

(5) Plotinus 4.3 [27] 15 (10-11)

Some [souls] have fallen entirely prey to Destiny (*heimarmenê*) here on earth. BF

Moreover, the soul awaiting incarnation may play a role in creating a body appropriate to its present concerns. The World Soul plays a role by illuminating matter, but this may provide only an outline of a body. On one view, the soul awaiting incarnation completes the construction, although the metaphor shifts from drawing to dancing a role. This omits the role of parents.

(6) Plotinus 6.7 [38] 7 (8-16)

What prevents the power of the Soul of the universe, in so much as it is the universal forming principle, from making preliminary sketches before the psychic powers go out from it? The preliminary sketches would be like illuminations preceding it into matter; the soul that is to shape matter now pays close attention to these outline sketches, which it articulates and brings into detailed realisation, each soul becoming the thing which it approaches, shaping itself in the way that a member of a dance troupe does in relation to his appointed part. BF

In the next passage, Plotinus offers alternatives. Either the human rational soul does not enter the animal at all, or it is present without being present, and animal bodies are formed by a mere image (*eidolôn*) of soul.

(7) Plotinus 1.1 [53] 11 (8-15)

In what way do animals possess the life principle?

Well, if animals are endowed with human souls that have sinned, as is claimed, then the life principle, in so far as it is separate, does not belong to them – it is present yet not present to them; rather their consciousness (*sunaisthêsis*) involves an image (*eidôlon*) of a soul with the body; their

qualified bodies are formed by the image of soul. But if the human soul does not enter it, then the qualified animal becomes animate by an illumination from All Soul. BF

Reading

Richard Sorabji, *Animal Minds and Human Morals*, London & Ithaca, NY 1993, 188-92.

6(d) Transmigration into animal bodies

Plato gives different accounts in different works of whether animals have reason. They do in those passages where he treats them as reincarnated humans, *Timaeus* 42B-D; 91D-92C; *Phaedo* 81D-82B; *Republic* 620A-D; *Phaedrus* 249B, though the second *Timaeus* passage warns that, except possibly for birds, animals do not use their reason. In two further playful passages, cranes and dogs are given reason, *Statesman* 263D; *Republic* 376B. But reason seems to be denied to animals in *Symposium* 207A-C; *Republic* 441A-B (cf. *Cratylus* 399C), while the *Laws* seems to waver between 961D and 963E.

Plotinus 1.1 [53] 11 (8-15), just cited in **6(c)** above, could well have led to uncertainty as to whether he took literally Plato's descriptions of the transmigration of souls into animal bodies. For he says that if the human soul enters (*eisdunai*) the animal at all, the separable, rational part does not come to belong to the animals but is present and not present to them. There is no such qualification in the other account cited from 6.7 [38] 7 (8-16).

If Porphyry, Plotinus' pupil, gives a similarly ambivalent account of transmigration, this could explain why there are conflicting reports on whether he accepted transmigration (Augustine *City of God* 10.30 and, as I believe (see below), Aeneas of Gaza deny; Nemesius *Nature of Man* 2.18 affirms).

That Porphyry did ascribe rational soul to animals we know from his *Abstinence*, especially Book 3, translated below in **11(b)**, and Iamblichus objects in his *On the Soul ap.* Stobaeum 1.375, translated there. Iamblichus' report *ap.* Stobaeum 1,458, also translated there, which might seem to suggest the opposite, is very lacunose.

Nonetheless, Porphyry did qualify the way in which animals have rational souls, because, as seen above under **6(b)**, he and Plotinus think that even in humans the rational soul is not spatially related to the body as something present in it.

Iamblichus rejected the view of Porphyry, his probable teacher, that animals have rational souls. Followed by Hierocles of Alexandria, he took Plato to mean only that a human can acquire a beast-like character, and Iamblichus attributes to Pythagoras the view that there is no transmigration of human souls into sacrificial animals. This is a sign that one motive for denying literal transmigration is to justify the Neoplatonist religious practice (vainly condemned by Porphyry) of animal sacrifice.

The Christian Aeneas of Gaza causes confusion by assimilating Iamblichus and Porphyry as both rejecting transmigration. I do not agree (*Animal Minds*, 191) that the new bodily shape (*morphê*) which some humans are said to take on is an *animal* one. It appears rather to be a *human* one, which, though animal-like, leaves their nature (*phusis*) intact.

Iamblichus' metaphorical reading of transmigration came to be replaced by an alternative that human souls can animate animals, but without entering their bodies, either (Proclus) by means of a (non-spatial) relationship (*skhesis*) or (Sallustius) by remote control from the outside. Proclus supports this view as more suited to the structural differences between animal and human bodies. Aeneas of

Gaza thinks that it began with Syrianus and Proclus, while Proclus cites an earlier Neoplatonist, Theodore of Asine. In fact, it fits well with Plotinus' ambivalent description at 1.1 [53] 11 (9-11), according to which the rational soul either does not enter the animal, or is present without being present. Indeed, it fits more generally, as Dirk Baltzly has commented to me, with the non-spatial account of the soul-body relation found in Plotinus and Porphyry, which was the subject of **6(b)**. It further convinced not only Sallustius, but also Hermeias of Alexandria.

Is there literal transmigration?

(1) Damascius *in Phaed.* I, 355-6 Westerink 191-3

Reincarnation in another species is explained by the older Platonists in the sense that the soul becomes an integrating part of the being in question. The more discerning critics have many arguments to oppose this view, their strongest point being that it will not fit in with Plato's statement that some 'join the gods': no more than they become parts of gods do the others become parts of animals. Others say that human beings are metaphorically assigned the form corresponding to their characters, donkeys standing for the donkeyish, gods for the god-like and so forth. This is disproved by the fact that Plato makes reincarnation into other kinds dependent on habit and training in a particular way of life in the human shape, so that for example those who are like donkeys become donkeys by reincarnation, and the god-like gods, which is the reverse of what these people make him say. A third group holds that reincarnation consists in an outward association with irrational animals. Their view is supported by Plato's remark that the similar will seek the company of its similar [*Phaedo* 82A7-8] and by the consideration that the words 'joining the gods' and 'having one's abode with the gods', as it was expressed before [69C7], clearly bear this meaning. Besides, if justice 'compels them to haunt graves' [81D7-8], why should it not also compel them to join brute animals, which, though alien to man, are at least more beautiful than corpses? [356] [82A10-B8] Why do those who 'practise the popular virtues' enter into irrational animals? Because they have immersed themselves deeply in worthless occupations. LGW

Iamblichus' view:

(2) Nemesius *Nature of Man* 2, 35,7-17 Morani

Iamblichus takes the opposite course to them: he says that there is a kind of soul, or rather different kinds, corresponding to the kind of animals. At any rate he wrote a monograph *That transmigrations do not occur from men into brute animals nor from brute animals into men but from animals to animals and from men to men.* He seems to me for this reason to have divined better not only Plato's judgment but also the truth itself, as can be established on many grounds, especially the following: non-rational ani-

mals do not exhibit any rational behaviour; for they possess neither skills nor learning nor planning nor virtues nor anything else that involves thought. From this it is clear that they have no share in rational soul. For it is also absurd to say that the non-rational are rational. JOU

(3) Pythagoras *ap.* Iamblichum *Pythagorean Life* 18.85

'The souls of humans may enter any living creature except those it is lawful to sacrifice. So we must eat only sacrificial animals, those that are fit to eat, not any other living creature.' GC

(4) Iamblichus in Aeneas of Gaza *Theophrastus* Colonna 12,11-25

Porphyry and Iamblichus came next, the one very learned and the other divinely inspired, and they were contemptuous of their predecessors in wisdom and blushed at Plato's ass and wolf and kite (*Phaedo* 82A) and considered that the substance of a rational soul was one thing and that of an irrational soul was another thing, and that they do not interchange, but in like manner the substances remain in the state in which they originally appeared. For the rational faculty is not accidental to the soul such that it might depart, but [each] substance remaining very different, it is entirely impossible for reason to be transformed into unreason, unless, they said, the irrational could embrace the nature of the rational. Having discussed these things and changing the direction of their enquiry, they said that man does not come to life again as an ass but as an ass-like man, nor as a lion but as a lion-like man. For one does not re-clothe the nature (*phusis*), but only the shape (*morphê*), of the body, just like the actors of tragedy on the stage, who at one time act Alcmaeon and at another time Orestes. MR

Proclus' view:

(5) Proclus *in Remp.* 2.309,28-310,21

Let us then state that we too say, absolutely in accordance with Plato's view, that soul passes into non-rational animals on account of the likeness of its life (*zôê*) [to theirs]; however it does not dwell in their bodies (for the natural structural differences between them militate against such an arrangement), but is bound together by a [mere] relation (*skhêsis*) between its life and their soul which animates the appropriate body, and which has no additional need of human soul. It was Theodorus of Asine who first had this intuition, and he persuaded us to think and write [this view]. Each soul is connected [to the animal] by the ready quality (*pathos*) that drew along the soul's container to its own life and impulse. The great Plotinus too established this point satisfactorily. Thus we have from both thinkers what it is that connects us to the non-rational animals, and that it is a quality, but one that is akin to those by which we [humans] might be bound (for in

the case of non-rational animals different qualities rule in different creatures, and so too with us. So what ruled in us binds us to what rules in them), and furthermore we have the way in which the connection between these comes about, and that it does so in a life that is relational (*en skhêsei*). For clearly our soul is present in us by a kind of allocation (*en katataxei* [i.e. distribution among particulars]), and similarly with the non-rational animals. And our soul, when it has come to be connected with theirs relationally, animates the non-rational animal from without, being relationally disposed towards it. For even in the case of daemons and gods, soul becomes a daemon or god relationally, but not a daemon itself or a god itself, since there is no fitting existence thereby for daemons or gods. RW

(6) Sallustius *On the Gods* 20 Rochefort

If (in the case of transmigration of souls), souls transmigrate into rational creatures, they become the very souls of the bodies they enter, and if they transmigrate into irrational creatures then they follow their bodies from without, just as our guardian spirits follow us. For in no way would a rational soul become the soul of an irrational creature. It is possible to see evidence of transmigration of souls from the congenital defects passed from parents to their children – for indeed why are some born blind and others weak and yet others with a soul afflicted by some illness? MR

Reading

Richard Sorabji, *Animal Minds and Human Morals*, London & Ithaca, NY 1993, 9-12 and ch. 13.

On allocation/distribution (*katataxis*), see A.C. Lloyd, *Anatomy of Neoplatonism*, Oxford 1990, 64-8.

7. Immobility of Soul and of Intellect

It was Aristotle, not Plato, who urged immobility.

Plato describes the soul as self-moving, *Phaedrus* 245C-246A; *Laws* 894D-896B. Moreover, we have seen in **6(a)** that despite the imperceptibility of soul, its movements are described as spatial movements, *Timaeus* 36C-D; 40A; 41D-42A; 43A-44B; 44D; 91E-92A; *Laws* 790D-791B. Some of these passages have been translated there.

Aristotle, though toying with the idea of self-movement, rules it out as not literally possible. A self-mover must split into a part that is moved and a part that is an unmoved mover, *Phys.* 8.5, 256b13-257b14. The ultimate unmoved mover turns out to be God. Simplicius, *in Phys.* 1220,29-36, following Eudemus, takes the discussion of a self-mover to be merely a concession to his predecessors.

Reading

Friedrich Solmsen, *Aristotle's System of the Physical World*, Ithaca, NY 1960, ch. 10.

Richard Sorabji, *Matter, Space and Motion*, London & Ithaca, NY 1988, ch. 13.

Aristotle denies that the soul can be moved at all, except as a passenger in the body, since it is not an extended thing, *DA* 1.3, 406b26-407a3. We should rather say that the person is moved because of having a soul, *DA* 1.4, 408a4-b18. The capacities which constitute soul are not literally affected, but only activated *DA* 2.5, so the soul too can be seen as an unmoved mover, *DA* 1.2, 403b29-31; 1.3, 406a3-8; b7-8; 1.4, 408b5-18; *Phys.* 8.5, 258a7.

The Neoplatonists were seen in **6(b)** to deny spatial location to the soul. They therefore, despite the evident difficulties, reinterpret Plato's references to the soul's spatial movement as being to non-spatial activities. One example of this, described in **6(b)**, is provided by Proclus *in Tim.* 3.341,3-342,2, who interprets the reverse, sideways and upside movements of the newly incarnate soul at *Tim.* 43E as simply forms of irrationality. Other examples are:

(1) Porphyry *Sentences* 27 Lamberz 16,5-6

It is not spatially (*topikôs*) that the incorporeal [reference is to soul] penetrates where it wishes. RRKS

(2) Priscian *Solutiones* 49,19-34

In fact, the rational soul is moved by physical (*corporales*) movements, but it does not itself move physically (*corporaliter*), but rather is subject to changes which these kinds of movement produce in it; for example, coming into being and decay, growth and diminution, change of quality and spatial

movement. For it appears to come into being when it proceeds from that which does not exist, that is, that which belongs to perceptible things, to that which does exist through a knowledge and understanding of higher and intelligible things. It also appears to partake of decay when it is transformed from that which does exist to that which does not exist. For when it is weakened, it loses that knowledge of higher things and when it is given over to physical offences (*crimina*) it appears to partake of decay. And yet again we say that the vision of the soul grows when it is turned round towards the good, the beautiful and the wise but diminishes when turned to the evil and the base and to such opposites. And it is changed in quality when it is transformed in its characteristics through good and evil and also through spatial movements. For now, when on earth, it is bound up in the body, as is its nature, however when released from the body, it returns to its natural places. So it is in this way that, while moved by itself, it makes even physical movements. MR

Simplicius accepts Alexander's view that the soul is immobile. The discovery by Marwan Rashed of substantial fragments of Alexander's lost *Physics* commentary, to be included in the translation series *Ancient Commentators on Aristotle*, has enabled Rashed to compare the original with our only previous evidence, the report of Alexander and reply in the commentary by Simplicius *in Phys.* 964,9-23; 965,21-30. Simplicius turns out to have omitted a crucial phrase. Alexander attacks the idea that at death the soul could be safely separated from the body, 'at any rate if separation is due to motion'. This clause, italicised below, omitted by Simplicius, shows that Alexander recognised the possibility of a reply like Simplicius' own, which looked for a different type of separation, not involving motion. According to Simplicius, the soul is already separate from body by having a separate substance. Motion, of the ordinary type, is impossible for indivisible entities, according to Aristotle *Physics* 6.4, 234b10-21, because, having no parts, they cannot be partly in their starting place and partly in the adjacent place. Alexander adds that vehicles could not provide a solution.

The author of Alexander (?) *Mantissa* 113, the section called *de Intellectu*, issues at lines 18-24 a similar denial that Aristotle's 'intellect from outside' (*GA* 2.3, 736b28) can come and go by ordinary motion. When it is separated from us, this is due to our not thinking it.

The same text reports, but rejects, a view which preserves the active intellect's immobility in yet another way. It is everywhere, but merely ceases to be *our* intellect when our body ceases to supply the right instrument for it, *Mantissa* 112,31-113,2, translated above under **3(g)**.

(3) Alexander *in Phys.*, Parisinus suppl. gr. 101r, ed. Rashed, in Sorabji, ed., *Aristotle and After*, BICS suppl. vol. 68, 1997, 185

By this means is resolved the proof which suppresses motion on the ground that the moving thing is either in that to which or in that from which, and that it is in neither because it is at rest at those times and will not be moving. For it was proved that it is in neither as a whole. It is clear from the present points that it is not possible for the soul to be separated from body, if it is incorporeal and without parts, *at any rate if separation is due*

to motion. Wishing (*boulomenoi*) to avoid this absurdity they attach a body <as a vehicle to it>; but they do not notice that inasmuch as they do that, either they say that body can go through body, if the soul is distributed throughout the whole body and is itself with body, or they separate the soul from this body too and make it move on its own in its distribution into bodies. MRd

(4) Simplicius *in Phys.* 964,9-23; 965,21-30

With this argument one can resolve the proof which suppresses motion on the ground that the moving thing must be either in that from which motion occurs or in that to which it occurs although neither is possible. When it is in that from which, it is not yet moving, and when it is in that to which, it is no longer moving, but it is stationary. For it has been proved that it is in neither as a whole, but one of its parts is in the first and the other in the second. In these lines, Alexander tries to draw everything towards his own theory of the soul, namely that the soul cannot become separated from the body. He says that from what has been established so far, this point is clear, if (1) soul is incorporeal and without parts, (2) what is without parts does not move (since one part of the moving thing is necessarily in that from which motion occurs and the other in that to which it occurs) and (3) what does not move cannot be separated. He says: 'Some people, in order to avoid this absurdity, attach a body as a vehicle to the soul; but they do not notice that inasmuch as they do that, either they say that body can go through body, if the soul is distributed throughout the whole body and is itself with body, or they separate the soul from this body too and make it move on its own in its distribution into bodies.' [...]

But against the other argument, the one based on the vehicle, we must say that we do not attach this vehicle to the soul in order for it to be separated from the body. For when the soul is in the body, it is separate from it by virtue of body's own substance. For if soul has some activities separate from body, it has *a fortiori* its substance separate, as Aristotle sets out in the *De anima.* But the soul is not described as being in this body in a spatial sense (*topikôs*), as in a vessel, but by way of a relation (*skhetikôs*). Therefore, it does not need another body with a spatial movement in order to become separate from the first. For body's unsuitability to receive the soul's irradiation is sufficient. That is the way the soul becomes separated. MRd

(5) Alexander(?) *Mantissa* 113,18-24

Rather, what comes to be in something through being an object of intellect does not change place. For neither do the forms of things perceived by the senses come to be in the sense organs as their *places* when we perceive them. The intellect from outside is called 'separate' and is separated from us not as going away somewhere and changing its place; rather, it is

separate because it exists in itself and without matter, and it is separated from us by not being intelligised, not by going away. For that is how it came to be in us, [too]. RWS

8. Vehicles of Soul

8(a) Origins of the idea

The soul needs some kind of physical housing, according to the Neoplatonists. The human body is compared by Plato *Phaedrus* 250C6 to an oyster, perhaps to an oyster housing a pearl (the soul), rather than to a shell housing an oyster. But the soul has other physical vehicles for the Neoplatonists besides the oyster-like one. There is a pneumatic vehicle, which on some views might eventually be shed, and on some views (Proclus *in Tim.* 3.236,31ff.; 298,12ff.; *ET* 196; 207-9; *PT* 3.5; Philoponus *in DA* 18,26-31), the still finer luminous (*augoeides*) vehicle, which is everlasting. The idea of a vehicle (*okhêma*) comes from Plato *Phaedrus* 247B, where the gods circle the heavens in vehicles, from *Phaedo* 113D, where the souls of the dead are taken in vehicles to Acheron, and from *Timaeus* 41D-E, where the divine 'Craftsman' implants the newly-made rational souls of humans into the stars as vehicles, to which they eventually may return (a belief also found in India) before instructing them on their future incarnation. (For the role of shooting stars, see below under **18(f)**). For different views on the variable durability of vehicles, see further under **12(c)**, Proclus *in Tim.* 3.234,8-238,23.

(1) Plato *Timaeus* 41D4-42A1

Having thus spoken, he poured the remnants of the previous ingredients into the bowl in which he had earlier blended and mixed the World Soul, and mixed them in the same sort of way, but they were no longer in the same way just as pure, but were second and third grade. When he had made the whole mixture, he divided it up into souls of an equal number to the stars, and assigned each soul to a particular star. Having placed them there as in a vehicle (*okhêma*), he showed them the nature of the universe, and told them the laws of destiny, namely that their first birth was one and the same for all, so that none would be disadvantaged by him, and that they were to be sown into the instruments of time appropriate for each, and were to grow up as the most god-fearing of creatures .... RW

Reading

H.J. Blumenthal, 'Soul vehicles in Simplicius', in S. Gersh and C. Kannengiesser, eds, *Platonism in Late Antiquity*, Notre Dame 1992, 173-88.

E.R. Dodds, *Proclus. Elements of Theology*, Cambridge 1963, 313-21.

John Finamore, *Iamblichus and the Theory of the Vehicle of the Soul*, Chico, CA 1985.

H. Schibli, 'Hierocles and the vehicle of the Soul', *Hermes* 121, 1993, 109ff.

8(b) Roles of vehicles

Vehicles are sensitive and feel desires and they generate perceptions and desires in our earthly bodies. Because they feel pain, they make possible punishment after death (see **8(g)**). Vehicles also enable souls after death to recognise each other, and even to speak and hear. Vehicles are used by some to explain how souls can move without fleshly bodies. Vehicles are also used to explain shades in Hades, daemons taking shape and prophetic messages and visions from the gods.

(i) Punishment after death through desires of the permanent pneumatic vehicle.

On punishment see further below, **8(g)**.

(1) Philoponus *in DA* 17,19-18,31

But the irrational soul no longer has its being in this [i.e. the dead body]: it persists also after the departure of the soul from this [body], having as its vehicle (*okhêma*) and substrate the pneumatic body, which itself is also composed of the four elements but is called pneumatic because of the element that predominates, air, just as our present body is called earthy as a result of the element that predominates there. How then is it evident that the irrational soul has its being in this? Or rather, we ought to ask first how it is evident that there is a pneumatic body at all. For it is proper to ask first whether it exists at all, and then to show that irrational life is in it. How then is it evident that there is *pneuma*?

[17,26] It is agreed, or rather demonstrated, that our soul after its departure from this body arrives in Hades, where it receives punishment for the ways in which it has not led a good life. For Providence is not only concerned with our being but also with our well-being. This is why the soul is not neglected when it slides away into what is contrary to nature, but it receives the attention (*epimeleia*) that is appropriate to it, and when it has sinned because of readiness to indulge, its cleansing necessarily also involves pain. Here, too, healing takes place by opposites. For this reason the soul that is being cleansed suffers pain in the places of punishment in the underworld through chastisement. Yet if the soul is incorporeal, it cannot be affected. How then is it chastised? At any rate a certain kind of body must be attached to it, which by undergoing immoderate expansion or contracting as a result of immoderate cold or heat, causes pain to the soul by sympathetic affection (*sumpatheia*), just as here, when our present body suffers, the soul has pain because of the physical bondage and the sympathetic affection that arises from this; for in itself the incorporeal is not affected by anything.

[18,7] Of what kind, then, is this body that is attached to it? It is not like our present body, for this disintegrates into the elements it was composed of. Rather, it is what we call the pneumatic body. In this, at any rate, anger (*thumos*) and appetite (*epithumia*) are present because of this as in a

substrate, and they are inseparable from it. How is this evident? For the fact that after the departure of the soul from this solid body, anger and appetite must still be present in the soul, for if they were not and the soul at its departure from the body was also separated from these emotions (*pathê*), it would be completely pure and liberated from coming-to-be. Yet being liberated from coming-to-be and from these emotions it would have ascended and it would not have come into the places of punishment in the underworld. For as we said, when it descended into coming-to-be, these emotions were given to it for the reasons mentioned; yet it is impossible for it to be separated from coming-to-be without purifying itself. Since it moves itself and fell out of the good of its own voluntarily, it must, in order to ascend again, purify itself. The places of punishment in the underworld cannot lift it upward, but only cause it to turn (*epistrephein*) to itself to such a degree that it ends up condemning itself and is purified by its own initiative and throws away voluntarily the things with which it was voluntarily bound by sympathetic affection.

[18,22] This is why people say that after the places of punishment in the underworld it comes back here until it has purified itself and ascends, ridding itself of coming-to-be, and then it does away also with anger and appetite together with this vehicle, I mean the *pneuma*; but [they say that] after this there is yet another body eternally attached to it, which is celestial and therefore eternal, which they call luminous (*augoeides*) or astral. For as it belongs to the cosmic entities, it must have a share assigned to it which it administers, being part of the cosmos; and if it is always in motion and always has to be actual, it must have a body eternally attached to it which it will make alive always; this is why they say the soul always has the luminous body, since this is eternal. PJvdE

(2) Olympiodorus *in Gorg.* 47.7,1-25 Westerink

Note that requital differs from justice. Justice is more universal, for justice deals with the impious, taking revenge upon them, and it also deals with the just, enabling them to enjoy its fruits. But requital is particular, applying only to those who act wrongly. Why is being subject to requital a 'prison' [*Gorgias*, 523B3]? Note that the philosophers believe the earth possesses holes like a pumice-stone, and that it is pierced right through to its very centre. They say that here in the centre there are a variety of places both fiery and chilly and also the Powers of Charon, as evidenced by exhalations from the earth. This place, at its deepest extent, is called Tartarus. Note that souls which have lived wicked lives remain here a certain time, until their vehicle pays the penalty. For since, as I have said, they acted wrongly out of desire for pleasure, they are also chastised through pain. Note that what is bound remains motionless, being in subjection. For on reaching Tartarus they are no longer in motion, for it is the centre of the earth and there is nothing deeper than it. If they move, they proceed back upward, for what is beyond the centre is up. That is why

the prison is located there, with daemonic and earthly Powers in command. They signify daemonic Powers through the [names of the] dog Cerberus and suchlike. And note that as a result you have a difference between divine and infernal Powers. RJ, KL, HT

(ii) Mutual recognition and communication after death by means of the keenly sensitive pneumatic vehicle

(3) Plotinus 4.4 [28] 5 (11-22)

So according to this account memory seems to have its beginnings in the heavens, when the [descending] soul has already abandoned the *intelligible* world. So when [the ascending soul] has left the *sensible* world and come to rest in the heavens it would not be surprising if, assuming that it had memory of many of the things in this world as described, it also recognised many of the souls it knew; for they must clothe themselves in bodies of similar configuration. Even if they changed the shapes of their bodies to spheres, would they not recognise each other by their characters and the particular nature of their behaviour? This is not absurd. Although they may have put aside their accidental properties, there is nothing to prevent their characters from persisting. Also if they were able to converse (*dialegesthai*) they would recognise each other. BF

(4) Plotinus 4.3 [27] 18 (13-22)

We should not think that souls use vocal sounds (*phônai*) when they are in the intelligible world, or at all, even though they have bodies in [their passage through] the heavens. Anything that employs discursive speech (*dialegesthai*) here [on earth] to meet a need or settle an argument has no place there. Souls there do everything in order according to nature, and give no commands or advice, recognising (*gignôskein*) things from each other by understanding (*sunesis*). Even on earth we can recognise much about a person who says nothing from the look in his eyes. There the whole body is pure and each is like an eye and nothing is hidden or wrapped up, but before one speaks to another, the other has seen and recognised. BF, RRKS

(5) Proclus *in Remp.* 2.164,21-8

Indeed one can say that souls' knowledge of one another actually comes about through their vehicles, just as it does here through our oyster-like bodies, but it is clearer through the former than through the latter. For the former are more receptive of reflections (*emphaseis*) from souls than the latter, though even in the latter some parts, namely those which are closer

to the soul, reveal the inner dispositions in the souls themselves more than others, for example the eyes. RW

(6) Proclus *in Remp.* 2.164,29-165,2

So the vehicles, being more greatly akin to souls than even these material eyes, produce an imprint (*apotupousthai*) of the soul which uses them, and through themselves reveal it too. RW

(7) Proclus *in Remp.* 2.165,16-19

We write this in order to show that souls there are able to know one another through their vehicles, having previously noted that in fact they even know one another incorporeally. RW

(8) Proclus *in Remp.* 2.165,22-6

If then they know one another, it is presumably no longer amazing that they recognise one another, since in their imaginations (*phantasiai*) they have stored up a stable image of one another and on each new sighting they stir up the memory of the soul which they are seeing. RW

(9) Proclus *in Remp.* 2.166,16-21

Moreover one should not doubt that souls converse (*dialegesthai*) despite not having a tongue or wind-pipe or lips, by which alone we can converse in our lives here. For their vehicles are wholly tongues, and are eyes in the whole of themselves and ears too, and they can hear and see and speak. RW

(10) Proclus *in Remp.* 2.166,28-167,2

... They [i.e. souls in the other world] can communicate their thoughts to one another by simpler motions [than in our world]. For just as their ways of thinking and imagining (*phantasiai*) are simpler, so too their conversing (*dialegesthai*) is achieved through motions which are similarly lesser, and which are free of the complexity of this world, as is reasonable. RW

(iii) Our desires and senses generated from those in our pneumatic vehicles

According to Syrianus, gods and daemons also have vehicles, but because of the complex composition of our souls, which in the *Timaeus* are constructed partly by the younger gods, the superior senses and desiderative capacities in our pneumatic vehicles generate inferior ones in our oyster-like bodies.

(11) Proclus *in Tim.* 3.237,15-31, following Syrianus

For the gods, then, irradiate their vehicles with lives of a rational sort, since they have intellective souls, while daemons who are distinctly defined by reason also use irrational powers, though controlling them. Our souls, which are much more possessed of the life in the vehicles which is irrational compared with their lives, also go further by adding another irrational life which is an extension from the life in the *pneuma* which the young gods weave on [Plato *Tim.* 41A-D]. All that [our souls] possess in imitation of the universal ones* is immortal, but the addition of the second life is of a mortal sort. The single perception in the former which is not acted on (*apathês*) generates in the pneumatic vehicle perception which is single but acted on (*pathêtikê*), and this generates the perceptions in the oyster-like body which are many and acted on. Also the single desiderative (*orektikê*) capacity in the former created the several desiderative capacities in the pneuma which have something separate from the oyster-like body and can be educated. But these created the lowest enmattered desiderative capacities in this body. RRKS

* Elsewhere *ta hola* can mean 'everything', but see narrative preceding **18(b)**(12) below.

(iv) Some humans can hear daemons through the common sense in their pneumatic vehicles

But ordinary human senses cannot hear daemons. Daemons also have impermanent pneumatic vehicles and can impress them into various shapes, as further described above under **2(h)**.

(12) Proclus *in Remp.* 2.167,17-23

This capacity [to hear the voices of daemons] is provided to some by priestly power, to others by their natural constitution, just as there are visions which can be seen by [some] eyes through one or other of these means that are invisible to other eyes. And so the primary vehicle of the souls, in possessing the common sense, can by nature hear things which are inaudible to all mortal hearing, and see things invisible to mortal sight. RW

(13) Porphyry *Abstinence* 2,39,1-3

[1] All these [daemons], and those that have the opposite power, are unseen and absolutely imperceptible to human senses. For they are not clad in a solid body, nor do they all have one shape, but they take many forms. The shapes which imprint and are stamped upon their *pneuma*, are sometimes manifest and sometimes invisible; and the worse ones sometimes change their shape. [2] The *pneuma*, insofar as it is corporeal, is acted on

(*pathêtikos*) and is corruptible. Though it is so bound by the souls that the form endures for a long time, it is not eternal; for it is reasonable to suppose that something continuously flows from them and that they are fed. [3] In the good daemons this is in balance, as in the bodies of those that are visible, but in the maleficent it is out of balance. GC

(v) Continuity for the soul after death

Because the standard Platonist vehicle carries the soul both in this life and after death, it provides more continuity for the soul than does the Christian resurrection body, which is acquired only after an interruption. In the version of Plato's *Timaeus*, the star-vehicle is instead the everlasting destination uniquely allotted to each soul for its return, and this presumably offers some kind of spatio-temporal means of identification for souls.

(vi) Enabling souls to move

See **8(d)** below.

(vii) Enabling prophecy and visions of gods

See **2(g)** above.

(viii) To explain shades in Hades, and daemons taking shape

See **2(h)** above.

8(c) Duration of vehicles

Are vehicles of the soul everlasting? Those who distinguished a luminous vehicle from the pneumatic one tended to make it everlasting, while allowing the pneumatic to be shed by the rational soul: see Proclus *in Tim.* 3. 236,31ff.; 298,12ff.; *ET* 196; 207-9; *PT* 3.5; Philoponus *in DA* 18,26-31 at **8(b)**(1) above and elsewhere. For permanence see also Iamblichus *ap.* Proclum *in Tim.* 3.234,32ff.; Hierocles *On the Golden Verses* 478 Mullach. But as regards the pneumatic vehicle, Proclus reports different views on its duration at *in Tim.* 3.234,8-235,9 translated below under **12(c)**. But he himself, following Syrianus, thinks that the pneumatic vehicle lasts no longer than the end of one cycle of reincarnations, of which, according to Plato *Phaedrus* 248E-249D there are ten in ten thousand years before the *apokatastasis*, Proclus *in Tim.* 3.237,5, i.e. the return to the beginning of the cycle. For the *sunapokatastasis* (Proclus *in Tim.* 3.84,1) of all the planets in their much longer cycle, see **Physics 11(b)** and below **12(d)**.

(1) Philoponus *in de Intellectu* p. 24 Verbeke (*CLCAG*) *ms.* lines 60-5

For plainly the body which is always attached to it and which is of luminous form [the Greek *augoeides*, luminous, was read and glossed in Moerbeke's Latin version as if it were *autoeides*, i.e. of the same form as itself], being much better than this body here and everlasting, uses better and purer senses, and therefore does not drag down the intellect, being removed from

all mortal troublesomeness but rather the reverse: it does not draw the intellect to itself but is drawn by it. WC

(2) Proclus *in Tim.* 3.236,31-237,6 Diehl, following Syrianus

Perhaps, then, it is better to say, with our teacher [Syrianus], that *pneuma* embraces the summits of the non-rational life, and that these summits, with the vehicle, are eternal inasmuch as they are produced by the Craftsman, but when they are drawn out and divided into parts they make this [non-rational] life which the young gods weave on, a life which is mortal because the soul must necessarily at some time shed this division into parts (*merismos*), when it meets with purification and returns to the start of its cycle (*apokathistanai*), but the life is more long-lasting than the life of this body. WC

(3) Damascius *in Phaed.* I §239 Westerink

The eighth [objection] will show the same accordance with our view. We do admit that the animated pneumatic body repeatedly enters and leaves this 'oyster-like' body. The philosophers themselves hold that the pneumatic coat accompanies the rational soul until its complete deliverance from genesis. What is more, Socrates himself is going to say a little later [81C9-E2] that 'the shadowy phantom (*phantasma*)' remains joined to the soul after death, 'until the soul, yielding to the compulsion of the corporeal, is imprisoned again in the oyster-like body'. Its cycle continues until the time when this vehicle, too, suffers privation of life. Nor will it ever be restored to possession of life, just as we asserted above with regard to this earthly body, once it has died; for complete immortality is not proved for the pneumatic body, any more than for the soul, but only continuance longer than a repeated or at least than a single recurrence of its accidents. LGW

(4) Damascius *ap.* Olympiodorum *in Alc. 1*, 5,7-9 Westerink

For the soul of the contemplative acts in accordance with its most divine component, and so is freed from the oyster-like and the pneumatic vehicle. RRKS

8(d) Vehicles as enabling souls to move and Alexander's criticism that vehicles would require bodies to be in the same place

We saw under 7 Alexander's newly discovered discussion and Simplicius' report of it, now seen to be inaccurate, in which Alexander denies that vehicles would enable souls to move. Vehicles are impossible since they require fleshly and vehicular bodies to be in the same place. In the passages below, Simplicius replies that this is not going to be a problem, and Syrianus uses Porphyry's term 'unfused' (*asun-*

khutos), encountered above, **6(b)**, to explain how such interpenetration is possible. Cf. the problem of bodies in the same place, discussed in **Physics 20(d)-(e)**.

(1) Alexander *in Phys.* Parisinus suppl. gr. 643,101r, translated under **7** above

(2) Alexander *ap.* Simplicium *in Phys.* 964,19-23, translated under **7** above

(3) Syrianus *in Metaph.* 85,15-28

But the reason for which this whole discussion was set going is that neither these men, nor those who hold that simple immaterial bodies pass through each other without dividing each other, take it to be impossible for a couple of three-dimensional solids to come together. What they say is that it is absolutely impossible for two material and resistant (*antitupa*) bodies to occupy the same place, but that immaterial bodies resemble the light emitted from different lamps which goes right through the whole of the same building, the light of each lamp passing through that of the other without being fused (*asunkhutos*) or divided. Even if someone wants to call the light incorporeal, it still has the same extension as bodies and stretches with them over the three dimensions, and nothing prevents the light of each lamp occupying the same place as that of every other and of the various bodies. The reason is none other than that the light of each lamp is simple and immaterial and is not divided or parted, but is united with its source and so attached to it that it exists when the source is shining, and departs when the source leaves. In fact, nothing prevents the immaterial bodies attached to our souls from doing the same. RRKS

(4) Simplicius *in Phys.* 966,5-12

If this is the reason for the different vehicles, it is not necessary, perhaps, that when [the soul] is in this [i.e. the body] it also have the pneumatic [vehicle], but if it should also have it, it is not necessary that that [i.e. the pneumatic vehicle] be in this [i.e. the body] in such a way that body passes through body, while I do not even think that this is absurd, [namely] that higher and finer things, not of like nature, should pass through crasser and more material things; for in fact solar light, according to those who say it is body, is said to pass through the whole air, and the heavenly spheres, which are full and not just [hollow] vaults, since they are continuous with respect to the centre, pass through the whole [spheres] that are next [inside them]. DK

8(e) The Christian resurrection body: same flesh, or (Origen) new vehicle with same bodily form?

The Platonist discussion of vehicles had its counterpart in the Christian discussion of the resurrection body, and in the case of Origen and Philoponus, the two

discussions came very close to each other. The pagan vehicle, being present in this life as well as after death, provides more continuity for the soul than the Christian resurrection body which is acquired only after an interruption. But some Christians accept the pagan vehicles, Boethius *Consolation* 3.9, Philoponus *in DA* 12ff.

The standard Christian view was that our resurrection bodies would contain the same flesh, or some of it, as our present bodies. But Plotinus' contemporary, the Christian Origen, believed he could solve the problems raised against the 'same flesh' requirement by postulating that we would have a new pneumatic vehicle (reported in Methodius *de Resurrectione* 2.30.8; 3.18.1) preserving only the same form (*eidos*) as that which characterises our present body (reported in Methodius *de Resurrectione* 1.22.3-5; 3.3.4-5; 3.7.1).

From Methodius' reply in his *On Resurrection*, preserved partly in Greek and partly in Slavonic, it appears, as Henry Chadwick has shown, that Origen saw this as an answer to at least four pagan objections. (i) First, our flesh is constantly being replaced by new food; why should it suddenly become stable? (ii) Secondly, although the earth, air, fire and water of which we are made may survive, reassembly would not be practicable. (iii) Thirdly, what use would we have in the next life for our present organs? (iv) Fourthly, some people are eaten by animals, and those animals eaten in their turn by humans: we are part of a food chain.

This last pagan objection, already confronted by the Christian Athenagoras in the late second century AD (see H. Chadwick) was to be repeated by Porphyry in his *Against the Christians,* if fr. 94 Harnack is genuine (from Makarios Magnes 4.24 *Texte und Untersuchungen* 37.4, Leipzig 1911, 92,14ff.). But Porphyry does not bring out as sharply as Origen the relevance of humans being included along with animals in the long chain of carnivores. It is this that gives force to Origen's question: how would there be enough flesh to resurrect all the people in the chain? One does not therefore need Augustine's more dramatic version in which someone is eaten by a famished cannibal.

Athenagoras *On the Resurrection* replies optimistically that human flesh cannot be digested. Augustine *City of God* 22.20, lines 15-39 answers that the cannibal can be resurrected from matter which he shed at an earlier date. Thomas Aquinas is still wrestling with the problem in the thirteenth century and makes the question sharper still by imagining a cannibal who dines only on embryos, *Summa Theologiae* Suppl. Q. 2.80, A. 4. Embryos consist at first only of the 'seminal matter' which made up their parents' seeds, and this they cannot afford to surrender, if they are to be resurrected. Thomas' solution turns on the idea that the cannibal and the embryonic victims each need to retain only their *seminal* matter. The rest of their resurrection bodies can be made up of any of the matter that they acquired and shed during their earthly lives.

Augustine further raises, and in some cases tackles, questions of the size and shape of resurrection bodies, given the constraint that no hair of our head should perish, and the probable fate of aborted embryos, dead infants and monstrous births.

Most of these problems would be avoided by Origen's suggestion that what needs to be preserved is only the form (*eidos*) that characterises the present body, re-imposed on a new body made of only two elements, air and fire, which constitute *pneuma*. This pneumatic body is described in Methodius' report as a vehicle (*okhêma*). But Methodius has an objection which would be agreed by the commentators Alexander and Philoponus and probably by Aristotle. Aristotle argues in *Phys.* 5.4,228a3-19 that one does not get back numerically the same event (*kinêsis*), or state (*hexis*) after an interruption. Similarly, Alexander objected to the Stoic belief in the exact repetition of history after a conflagration, that there would not then be the same persons, because the interruption (*dialeipein*) would mean there

was not the same individual form (*atomon eidos*) of the person, *ap.* Philoponum *in GC* 314,9-22. Philoponus, who cites this response, considers that a form can persist through the gradual replacement of matter, but not if it is replaced all at once (*in GC* 106,3-11, with further caveat, 107,3-7). Porphyry *ap.* Proclum *in Tim.* 3.234.23-6 gives a similar verdict about soul vehicles, that, when a new one is recruited at the next incarnation, the same individual one (*auta hekasta*) no longer exists, and its distinctive quality (*idiotés*) does not persist (*diamenein*). These passages are translated in **Logic and Metaphysics 6(h)**, the last also below under **12(c)**. The bishop Methodius would therefore have backing for his complaint against Origen that the original distinctive form (*eidos*) would not be preserved in the new pneumatic body, but would perish with the flesh. In the next section, **8(f)**, we shall see that Methodius catches Origen conceding even more, that we will not need the same organs, so that the bodily form will not even be *qualitatively* the same.

Despite this, Philoponus himself agreed with Origen that the resurrection body would be a new one (fragments collected by A. Van Roey, 'Un traité cononite contre Jean Philopon sur le resurrection', *Hommage à Maurits Geerard*, Wetteren 1984). And there would be an easy way for Origen and Philoponus to defend themselves against the objection that the bodily form will not be *numerically* the same. The restoration of numerically the same individual, they could say, does not require the restoration of *numerically* the same bodily form. Such a requirement would threaten a regress or circle. All that is required in fact is a *qualitatively* indistinguishable bodily form (or peculiar quality). In fact, even that requirement is stronger than necessary. Origen knew that the Stoics had allowed what he considers as blemishes like freckles to be removed in the next cycle of the universe (*Against Celsus* 5.20, translated in **Logic and Metaphysics 6(h)**), and he says the same about the resurrection body (Methodius *Res.* 1.22.3-5).

The harder problem for Origen is the other one, that if the same organs will not be needed (and this is highly plausible), then the bodily form will not even be *qualitatively* the same.

See **Logic and Metaphysics 6(h)**, where the subject is more fully documented and discussed, with surveys of the views of pagan Greek schools and Christians on the recurrence of the same body and person after the interruption of death, and with the sources of the discussion in Aristotle, and attention to modern parallels.

Origen on the same bodily form:

(1) Origen *ap.* Methodium *de Resurrectione* 1.22.3 in *GCS*, ed. Bonwetsch = Epiphanius *Panarion Haer.* 64.14 Holl and Dummer 423-4 (*GCS* 2) = Origen *Selecta in Psalmos* 11 Lommatzsch 384ff.

Yet Paul or Peter, for instance, are always the same, and not only in respect of the soul whose substance in us neither flows nor ever receives any accretions. They are the same, even if the nature of the body is subject to flow, thanks to the form (*eidos*) which characterises the body being the same, so that the imprints which provide the bodily quality of Peter and Paul also remain the same. It is because of this quality that scars remain in our bodies from childhood and other uniquely distinctive features (*idiômata*), like freckles and anything further of that sort. [I mean] this bodily form with which Peter and Paul are informed is again draped round

the soul in the resurrection, but changed for the better. I do not at all mean this substrate which had been assigned to the soul originally. RRKS

(2) Origen *ap.* Methodium *de Resurrectione* 3.3.4-5 in *GCS*, ed. Bonwetsch p. 391 = Photius *Bibliotheca* 234 (Methodius), 299a-b Henry, Budé edition vol. 5, p. 101

Origen, then, wants not that the same flesh should be resurrected for the soul, but that such and such a shape of each, conforming to the form (*eidos*) which now characterises the flesh, should be imprinted in a different pneumatic body and resurrected, so that each person may again appear the same in shape, and this is the promised resurrection. For he says that the material body is subject to flux and never remains the same in itself, but departs and arrives in connexion with the form (*eidos*) which characterises the shape (*morphê*). It is the form by which the shape (*skhêma*) is governed. Thus the resurrection must be in respect of form only. RRKS

Origen on the pneumatic vehicle:

(3) Origen *ap.* Methodium *de Resurrectione* 2.30.8 in *GCS*, ed. Bonwetsch p. 388 = Photius *Bibliotheca* 234 (Methodius), 299a Henry, Budé edition vol. 5, p. 100

Any mixture consisting of pure air and pure fire is of the same substance as the angels and cannot have the quality of earth and water, since it would then come about that it was earthy. Origen imagined that the human body which is going to be resurrected was of such a kind and of such materials, and he even called it a pneumatic body. RRKS

(4) Origen *ap.* Methodium *de Resurrectione* 3.18.1 in *GCS*, ed. Bonwetsch pp. 414-15 = Photius *Bibliotheca* 234 (Methodius), 300b-301a Henry, Budé edition vol. 5, p. 105

Having expounded the view that, after its departure from here, the soul has a vehicle (*okhêma*) different from, but of the same form as (*homoeides*) this perceptible one, he represents the soul as incorporeal by a somewhat Platonic rationale. Thus in the light of his saying that after its departure from the world it needs a vehicle and vestments, as not being able to persist naked, how could it fail to be incorporeal in itself? RRKS

See also Origen *Against Celsus* 7.32, which also speaks of a new body, although at 4.57 he speaks as if it is only the qualities that change.

Methodius' objection (continued in the next section, **8(f)**):

(5) Methodius *de Resurrectione* 3.6.7 in *GCS*, ed. Bonwetsch pp. 397-8 = Photius *Bibliotheca* 234 (Methodius), 300b Henry, Budé edition vol. 5, p. 104

But he [Origen] says, 'yes, for [the soul] will be relocated in a pneumatic body'. [Methodius]: But then it must be admitted that the original (*auto to prôton*) unique form (*eidos idiôs*) itself will not be resurrected, because its quality is changed (*sunalloiusthai*) together with the flesh and it perishes with (*sumphthinai*) the flesh. For even if it is remoulded (*metaplattesthai*) into a pneumatic body, that is not the original unique substrate (*auto idiôs to prôton hupokeimenon*) [of the soul], but a certain likeness of it remoulded into a tenuous body. But if [old Slavonic here has extra material] neither the form nor the body is resurrected the same, but is different from the preceding one, since what is like is different from what is like it, it cannot be that original one in relation to which it was created. RRKS

The argument from chains of carnivores, which Origen's vehicle is meant to avoid, is expressed by Origen as follows.

(6) Origen *ap.* Methodium *de Resurrectione* 1.20.4 in *GCS*, ed. Bonwetsch p. 243 = Epiphanius *Panarion Haer.* 64.12 in *GCS* 2, ed. Holl and Dummer pp. 421-2

As food is assembled in our body, and changes what it is like, so our bodies are changed in carnivorous birds and beasts and become parts of their bodies and again they are eaten by men or other animals and are changed in their turn and become the bodies of men or other animals. When this happens over a long time, necessarily the same body will become part of different humans. Of which human, then, will it be the body in the resurrection? RRKS

Augustine's version of the problem:

(7) Augustine *City of God* 22.20 Dombart and Kalb *CCL* 48, lines 15-39

And now we must offer a solution to the problem that seems rather insuperable to others. The problem is: when the flesh of a dead person becomes the flesh of another living person, to which of them in preference is it restored at the resurrection? If someone who is consumed by hunger under such duress should feed on the dead bodies of people, which evil has from time to time happened, as we know from the testimony of history long past and also from the unhappy events of our own times: will anyone with sound reason maintain that the whole has been passed by digestion through the deepest passages and none has been changed and converted into his flesh, although that very thinness, which was and then was no more, shows that physical deficiencies are supplied by such nutriment?

[25] But what I have just said shortly before should be enough to untie

this knot as well. Whatever flesh hunger has drained away [from the cannibal] has certainly been dispersed to the winds and from there the Creator, as I have said, is able to recall what has slipped away. And so that flesh will be restored to the person in whom it first began to be human flesh. From the second person [the victim] the flesh must be thought of as taken by way of loan which, like borrowed money, has to be repaid to the source from which it was taken. But to the person whom hunger has emaciated [the cannibal] his own flesh will be restored by the one who can recall even what has evaporated. Yet even if that flesh had completely perished, and none of its material had remained in any of the recesses of the natural world, the Almighty would restore it from wherever he wanted. But on account of the saying of the Truth, in which it is said that 'not a hair of your head will perish [Luke 21.18]', it is absurd to think, when a person's hair cannot perish, that so much flesh, wasted and used up by hunger, could perish. DGR

Augustine's opponents raise the question of aborted foetuses, deformed and monstrous births, but they do so not in order to ask whether these beings are sufficiently developed for resurrection, and at what point development is sufficient. Rather, they ask, on the assumption that these beings will be resurrected, what shape and size they will be given in the resurrection.

(8) Augustine *City of God* 22.12 Dombart and Kalb *CCL* 48 lines 1-38; 45-51

But they [the pagans] are accustomed to subject our faith (*fides*) that the flesh will be resurrected to the most rigorous examination, and to make fun of it by inquiring as follows, 'What about abortions? Will they rise again?' and 'Since the Lord says, "Truly I say to you, not one hair on your head will perish" [Luke 21.18]', they ask, 'Will all bodies be of equal height and mass? Or will there be different sizes of bodies? And if they will all be the same, from where will those aborted ones get that which they did not have here in the mass of the body, if those very ones will also rise again?' Or if they will not rise again, because they were not even born but discharged, then they raise the same question in the case of little children: 'from where will the full development of the body be credited to them, which we see now to be lacking?' For certainly we are not going to say that those infants will not rise again, who have the potentiality (*capaces*) not only of birth (*generationis*), but also of being reborn (*regenerationis*). Then they ask, 'What dimensions will the equality of size itself have?' If all persons will be destined to be as big and as tall as the largest and tallest were down here, then they ask not only in the case of little children, but regarding the majority of humankind, 'from where will this be added to them which they lacked here, if each one receives precisely what he possessed here?' Moreover, if, as the Apostle says [Ephesians 4.13], we shall all attain 'to the measure of the age of the fullness of Christ', and if his other statement

[Romans 8.29], 'whom he predestined to be conformed into the likeness of his Son' is to be understood as meaning that all who will be in his kingdom will have human bodies of the stature and dimensions of the body of Christ, then, they say, 'many people will need a reduction in size and height of body; and where then will be [that promise], "not a hair of your head will perish", if from the very mass of the body so much will perish?' And yet, concerning the very hairs, one might ask whether whatever the barber has cut off shall be returned. But if it will be returned, who would not recoil at that unsightliness? And of the fingernails it would seem to follow of necessity that as much as care of the body has cut away, so much would be returned. And then where will be the comeliness, which ought surely to be greater in that immortality then, than it could be in the state of corruption? And yet if it will not return, it follows that it will perish. So then how, they ask, will 'not a hair of your head perish'? They produce similar arguments also about fatness and thinness. If all are to be equal, then certainly some will not be thin and some fat. Then something will accrue to some, from others something be taken away; and in that case what is to be received is not what was there. Rather, somewhere something is to be added that was not there, and elsewhere something is to be lost that was there. ...

[45] They also make inquiries into all the deformities and defects, either accidental or from birth, when they bring to mind with horror and derision monstrous births, and they ask, what resurrection is in store for each deformity. If we reply that nothing of the sort will reappear in the resurrected body, then they take it that they will confute our defence from the marks of wounds, with which we preach Christ the Lord rose from the dead. DGR

(9) Augustine *City of God* 22.20 Dombart and Kalb *CCL* 48, lines 40-57

When all these arguments have been examined and weighed in the small measure we can manage, we reach this conclusion, that in the resurrection of the body, the size of bodies has for eternity the dimensions possessed by the formula of youth perfected or to be perfected that was bestowed on each person's body, with its appropriate comeliness preserved also in the measurements of all bodily members. But if, in order that this comeliness be preserved, something should have been taken away from some unbecoming excess formed in some part, which could be spread throughout the whole body, so that it should not perish, but the congruence of the parts should be maintained everywhere, it is then not absurd for us to believe that something from that source might also be added to the stature of the body, since something that would certainly not be becoming if it were irregularly concentrated in one part is getting distributed to all parts so that they may preserve their comeliness.

[51] Or if it is asserted that every person is to rise again with that stature in which he died, [such a claim] should not be resisted contentiously; provided that all deformity should be absent, all infirmity, all

dullness, and all corruption, and anything else that does not become that kingdom, in which the sons of the resurrection and of the promise will be equal to the angels of God, if not in body or in age, then surely in happiness .... DGR

Reading

Henry Chadwick, 'Origen, Celsus and the resurrection of the body', *Harvard Theological Review* 41, 1948, 83-102.

Mark Edwards, 'Origen's two resurrections', *Journal of Theological Studies* 46, 1995, 502-18.

R.M. Grant, 'Athenagoras or pseudo-Athenagoras?' *Harvard Theological Review* 49, 1956, 121ff.

Ph. Lyndon Reynolds, *Food and the Body: Some Peculiar Questions in High Medieval Theology*, Leiden 1999.

A. van Roey, 'Un traité cononite contre Jean Philopone sur le resurrection', in *Hommage à Maurits Geerard*, Wetteren 1984.

Richard Sorabji, in Richard Sorabji, ed., *Philoponus and the Rejection of Aristotelian Science*, London & Ithaca, NY 1987, ch. 1, 32-3.

8(f) Spherical shape of vehicles

A spherical shape for vehicles is implied by Plato *Timaeus* 41D-E, where the *stars* serve as vehicles for newly created rational souls.

The physical soul itself is spherical for the Stoic Chrysippus. Seneca was accordingly able to joke that the Emperor Claudius might have something in common with the spherical Stoic gods.

(1) *Schol. on Iliad* 23.65 = *SVF* 2.815

Chrysippus' opinion is that souls become spherical after separation from the body. RRKS

(2) Seneca *Pumpkinification of Claudius* 8

How can he [the Emperor Claudius] be spherical, as Varro says, without hand, without foreskin? I now see there is something of the Stoic god in him: he has neither heart, nor head. RRKS

Spherical vehicles are discussed by Plotinus as not impeding recognition and by Iamblichus.

(3) Plotinus 4.4 [28] 5 (18), translated above under **8(b)**

(4) Iamblichus *ap.* Proclum *in Tim.* 2.72,14 (= fr. 49 Dillon)

Hence our 'vehicle' too is spherically fashioned, and it moves in a circle whenever the soul achieves an exeptional likeness to intellect. HT

Origen was accused (wrongly) of holding that resurrection bodies are spherical.

(5) Justinian, *Letter to Mennas* Mansi 9 516D

He [i.e. Origen] says that in the resurrection the bodies of humans will rise spherical. RRKS

(6) Anathema 10 of Constantinople II

[If anyone says that] the Lord's body after the resurrection is ethereal and spherical in shape, and that the bodies of the rest will be like that after the resurrection ... [let him be anathema]. RRKS

The mistaken idea that Origen postulated spherical resurrection bodies is in some ways the opposite of the truth. As explained in the last section, **8(e)**, he proposed that resurrection bodies would not need to contain the same matter as earthly ones, the majority Christian view. It would be enough if resurrection bodies had the same bodily form as before, with blemishes removed (Origen *ap.* Methodium *Res.* 1.22.3-5; 3.3.4-5 both translated there; 3.7.1 Bonwetsch (*GCS*)). But Methodius catches Origen out (3.7.1-7) in a contradiction, because he also said that in the resurrection we would not need the same organs (so also 1.7; 1.24; Jerome *Against John of Jerusalem* 25 (PL 23, 375)). How then could the bodily form be the same? Origen would be safer withdrawing his idea that most of our organs are shed, compelling though it is. But even his postulate of shedding does not imply that the resurrection body is spherical.

For Methodius' charge that Origen contradicts himself, there is a report which is taken from a German translation of the Old Slavonic manuscripts, with some Greek quotations:

(7) Origen *ap.* Methodium *de Resurrectione* 3.7.1-7, pp. 398,20-399,25 in *GCS* ed. Bonwetsch from German translation of Old Slavic *ms.* with some Greek quotations

But even here [Origen] is eristical. For after declaring that the form is what is resurrected, when glorification accrues to it, [Origen] took back his words 'as the form (*eidos*) of Jesus, Moses and Elijah was no different in the Resurrection from what it had been'; he had forgotten them, and like unreasoning people began to proclaim something else. For not being willing to speak the true words, 'Where there will be wailing and gnashing of teeth [Matthew 8,12; 13,42 and 50; 22,13; 24,51; 25,30; Luke 13,28]', he instead fabricated words opposite to the true words, as follows. 'What need of teeth is there for those who are being punished? For they will not eat when situated in Gehenna and the Creator fashioned every part of the body for some purpose', and 'It is not possible that we should be resurrected with the same quality, possessed of legs and hands again and suchlike.'

[399,6] He has said something thoroughly self-contradictory. For how is it not contradictory which he affirms that the persisting form will be resurrected and further declares that the same imprint ('the same likeness') will not come about, while nevertheless no other form will come

about than the identical imprint ('the likeness') which shows each and every form that is in each and every individual. For he says, that it is what shows the quality of the bodily parts in the character (*kharaktêr*) of the shape of each person that is form. Thus if he hopes that the resurrection happens in the (essential) form, one must be resurrected in possession of the form again, which means hands, feet and other members, even if the body comes to be changed into something more subtle.

[399,17] Origen says, 'As it is inappropriate to be resurrected in the same form, with feet and teeth and other members.' For, if there is absolutely no need there of hands, nor of feet, nor of other (sc. members), then the form is not resurrected either. If, however, the form is resurrected, then everything must be resurrected that was in there first. For even if the body given to the soul will be a spiritual body, even so the spiritual body too must be assimilated to the first body and must be given its shape, if the resurrection is only in respect of form. RRKS

Egg-shaped vehicles are a distortion from the spherical shape.

(8) Olympiodorus *in Alc. 1,* 16,7-17,4 Westerink

One should consider, then, for what sort of reason people came to the idea of saying that daemons exist. We say therefore that just as our soul springs forth in life and bubbles up in it, and is not able to exist without giving life (for when the soul is inactive, it is in respect of cognitive [faculties], as when it is constrained by lethargy, but it is never inactive in respect of the vital faculty), because the oyster-like body was not always fastened to it, there was conceived for the soul an egg-shaped or luminous vehicle (for it is spoken of in both senses: 'egg-shaped' because of its shape, for it is not round in every respect like the heavens but less round, wherefore it is sometimes said to suffer distortion but still not perish; for it is of the same substance as the heavens, that is, of the fifth element, for which reason it is eternal; and it is called 'luminous' from its substance which is translucent and heavenly). MR

Contrast the Epicurean view that rationality requires a human shape, Cicero *ND* 1.76; Demetrius of Laconia, de Falco, col. 14, 3-8.

8(g) Punishment after death and the resurrection body

We have already seen under **8(b)** that vehicles for the Neoplatonists enabled souls to be punished after death. Philoponus *in DA* 17,19-18,31; Olympiodorus *in Gorg.* 47.7, 248,13-249,7. Origen from the Latin of Rufinus, though believing, according to Methodius, in a resurrection vehicle, takes from his predecessor in the Alexandrian school, Clement, the idea that the fire of punishment is not, after all, a physical agent, but is remorse. Augustine *City of God* 21.2-4; 9 does not rule this out, but argues that resurrection bodies could feel everlasting pain from fire, without being consumed. His *Gen. Lit.* 10.32-3 had argued that the soul has no body

at first after death, but it goes somewhere that is *like* body, and so may suffer punishment, being like body itself. Thomas Aquinas *Summa Theologiae* Suppl. Q. 86, A. 3, accepts the pain of fire for resurrection bodies, but considers that fire inflicts a purely psychological punishment of frustrating the will in the case of souls temporarily separated from bodies before the resurrection, *Summa Theologiae*, Suppl. Q. 70, A. 3. Augustine *City of God* 21.10 discusses the effect of fire on incorporeal demons.

For the makings of a psychological account of punishment in the pagans, see **18(a)** Iamblichus *Myst.* 1.13. Iamblichus there, followed by Simplicius' commentary on Epictetus, explains our need to propitiate God as due to our having stepped out of God's light, or become unlike him, not to his having changed.

(1) Origen *On First Principles* 2.10.4-5 Görgemanns, Karpp

If then that is how it is with the quality of the body that will rise from the dead, let us now see what the threat of eternal fire means. For we find it signified (*designari*) in the prophet Isaiah that each person is punished by his own fire [Is. 50.11]: 'Walk in the light of your fire and in the flame, which you yourselves have kindled'. By these words this [text] seems to indicate, that each sinner himself lights the flame of his own fire, and is not plunged into some fire which was previously lit by someone else or existed before him. The nourishment and matter (*materia*) of this fire is our sins, which are called by the apostle Paul [see I Cor. 3.12] wood, hay, and stubble. And I think that it is just as when an abundance of nourishment in the body, and the quality or quantity which disagrees with us generates fevers, and fevers of a kind and duration which is diverse according to the degree in which the accumulated excess (*intemperies*) has supplied matter and fuel for fevers. This quality of matter, accumulated from diverse kinds of excess, is the cause of a harsher and more drawn-out illness. Just so, when the soul has collected a multitude of evil deeds and a plethora of sins into itself, at a suitable time that entire congregation of evils boils up for the purpose of torment and is inflamed into punishment. Then also the mind (*mens*) itself or conscience (*conscientia*) recalls by divine power into the memory everything for which it had printed in itself certain marks and impressions (*signa quaedam ac formas*) when it sinned, and will see exposed before its eyes a kind of narrative (*historia*) of its iniquities in particular acts, which it carried out foully and wickedly or even blasphemously. Then the very conscience is agitated (*agitatur*) and pricked (*compungitur*) by its own pangs (*stimulis*), and is itself made an accuser and witness against itself.

It is this, I think, that the apostle Paul has in mind when he says [Rom. 2.15]: 'Their thoughts argue the case on either side, against them or even for them, on the day when God judges the secrets of humans through Christ Jesus, as my gospel declares.' From this it is understood that, concerning the very substance of the soul, certain torments are generated from the destructive feelings (*affectus*) themselves of sinners.

[5] And lest this matter might seem to you too difficult to comprehend,

it can be considered from the point of view of these vices of passions (*passiones*), which are wont to happen to souls, that is when the soul is burned up by the flames of love or jealousy, or is wasted away by the fires of envy, or when it is violently shaken (*agitatur*) by a madness of anger or is consumed by the heavy weight of sadness. [Consider] how some who find the excesses (*nimietates*) of these evils intolerable have preferred to submit to death rather than to suffer tortures (*cruciatus*) of this sort. You will ask, rightly, if for those who are implicated by those evils of vices which we have discussed above and who have not yet been able to provide themselves with any amelioration (*emendatio*) while placed here in this life, and who depart from this world in such a state, it should suffice for punishment that they are tortured by those destructive feelings (*affectus*) which remain in them, that is those feelings of anger or wrath or madness or grief, whose mortal poison certainly no remedy of reform in this life has soothed, or whether, when their feelings have changed, they will be tormented by the pangs of a common punishment.

But I think that still another kind of punishment can be understood, that just as we feel bodily limbs which are loosed and their joints (*compages*) torn apart from one another producing a torture of immense pain, so when the soul is found with no order and [jointed] cohesion (*compago*) nor with that harmony which has been created by God for good works and for feeling usefully, nor in accordance with itself in the cohesion of rational motions, it [the soul] is then conceived to bear the punishment and torment of its own inner schism (*discidium*), and to feel the torment of its own instability and disorder. And when the dissolution and inner rending of this soul has been tested in the manner of fire brought to bear, doubtless it is established in a stronger union and restoration of itself. DGR

(2) Origen in Jerome *Letter* 124.7

As for the fire of Gehenna and the torments with which Holy Scripture threatens sinners, [Origen] does not locate them in punishments, but in the sinners' conscience (*conscientia*), when by the goodness and power of God the entire memory of our sins is placed before our eyes, and the entire crop of our vices arises as if from seeds left in the soul, and whatever base or impious things we have done in life, a picture is drawn of each before our gaze, and the mind, contemplating its past pleasures, is punished by the burning heat of conscience, and stabbed by the shafts of remorse. RRKS

(3) Clement *Strom.* 7.6.34.4 Stählin

We affirm that the fire does not purify (*hagiazein*) the flesh, but rather sin-sick souls. We mean no ordinary and all-consuming fire, but rather the mental (*phronimos*) fire, that which 'pierces the soul' which passes through the fire. DGR

8(g) Punishment after death and the resurrection body

Reading

P. Agaësse, A. Solignac, eds, *Oeuvres de Saint Augustin*, Bibliothèque Augustinienne 49, *La genèse au sens littéral*, 8-12, pp. 583-4.

G. Verbeke, *L'évolution de la doctrine du Pneuma du Stoïcisme à S. Augustin*, Paris 1945.

9. Knowledge of Other Minds

(i) Humans

The idea in Plato's *First Alcibiades*, repeated by Aristotle, that we know ourselves as reflected through others, reverses Descartes' view that we know ourselves first and make an inference to other minds. See **4(e)**. Augustine rejects the 'through others' idea and moves in Descartes' direction, when he says that nothing is so present to the soul as itself. See **4(e)**, which also cites the Stoic Hierocles for the view that the newborn chick's knowledge of how to secure its own person involves knowledge of the likely behaviour of bull and hawk.

Plotinus' general account of sympathy with other minds appeals not to bodies, but to the unity of all souls, 4.3 [27] 8 (1-5), while Themistius, appealing to Plato *Gorgias* 481C5-D1 on the similarity of human experience, explains mutual understanding by the unity of the human productive intellect, *in DA* 103,32-104,16, translated in **Logic and Metaphysics 17(e)**. Philoponus assumes that knowledge of other minds is through other bodies. He speaks of changes in the body which accompany thinking and enable us to see whether someone has understood, *in DA* 332,12-17 and *in Phys.* 7, translated from Arabic 771,21-772,3, both under **6(a)** above (cf. Philo *Vit. Contempl.* 77). See further above under **6(c)** and **(d)** for the idea that the beast-like soul creates for itself either a beast's, or a beast-like, body. But elsewhere, Philoponus *Contra Proclum* 77,15-24; *in Cat.* 14,2-5, translated in **Logic and Metaphysics 7(a)**(11) thinks that fleshly bodies are what *prevent* us apprehending each other's thoughts. So too Augustine in (3) below and in *de Gen. c. Man.* 2.21.32. Philoponus' claims are compatible, for it is the concealment introduced by bodies that makes us rely on facial expressions and speech.

In *Confessions* 10.2.2-10.2.3, Augustine cites 1 Corinthians 2.11, to show that our lack of knowledge of other minds will prevent other people from knowing whether his confession is true, but 1 Corinthians 13.7, to show that through love people can believe him. God, of course, knows Augustine's mind. Moreover, *City of God* 22.29, Elisha saw in his heart the sin of his wicked servant, in his absence, and could have seen other things by his spirit (*spiritus*) with his eyes shut.

According to Simplicius *in Cat.* 24,9-13, translated in **Logic and Metaphysics 7(h)**, a human understands speech by projecting (*proballesthai*) concepts (*ennoiai*) to match the words he is hearing.

(ii) Soul vehicles and spiritual bodies

Plotinus wrestles with the question whether souls equipped with spherical vehicles after death could recognise each other (answer: yes). See **8(b)**, which quotes from Plotinus 4.4 [28] 5 (11-22) and Proclus *in Remp.* 2.164-7. Plotinus further points out that these vehicles not only facilitate recognition, but also impede concealment of thoughts, 4.3 [27] 18 (13-22), translated *ibidem*. Proclus also says *ibidem* that recognition can be incorporeal as well as through vehicles, *in Remp.* 2.165,16-19.

Augustine says, *City of God* 22.29, that since Elisha saw the sin of his wicked servant, all the more, when we have spiritual bodies in the next life, will our

thoughts be open to each other, as promised in 1 Corinthians 4.5. In *de Gen. c. Man.* 2, they were open when we had spiritual bodies before the Fall.

(iii) Gods

See Iamblichus *ap.* Proclum *in Tim.* 1.209,1-212,6 on how the gods hear prayers, under **18(c)** below. Prayer formulae are symbols supplied by the gods themselves and gods need no ears to understand their inferiors, *Myst.* 1.15, 47,18-48,4. Gods and daemons know our intention (*proairesis*) before we pray, not from the outside, Proclus *in Crat.* 73, pp. 35, 24-6 Pasquali.

As for the gods' knowledge of each other, they know each other's thoughts intellectually (*noêtikôs*), not perceptually, Proclus *in Crat.* 77, p. 37,3-5, whereas humans lack any such shared thought (*koinê noêsis*), Simplicius *in Cat.* 15,8-10, so need to communicate through names.

(iv) Daemons

Proclus' view that daemons know our intentions not from the outside, *in Crat.* 73, as above, was disputed as regards the Christians' demons. According to Evagrius, demons know human thoughts only through speech and gesture, so we can conceal our thoughts (*Practical Treatise* 47, *On Various Bad Thoughts* 27). Augustine suggests they may know our thoughts directly (*Literal Interpretation of Genesis* 12.17.34). But Augustine also suggests that aerial or aetherial creatures may have sharp enough perception to notice the faint physical traces of our mental movements, *Letter 9*, to Nebridius, translated above in **3(g)**.

(v) Animals

The ability of animals and birds to understand humans, gods and each other is argued by Porphyry *Abstinence* 3.3.1-3.6.7, translated in **Logic and Metaphysics 7(n)**.

(1) Plotinus 4.3 [27] 8 (1-5)

So much by way of resolution of the question [whether other souls are part of All Soul]. The fact of sympathy does not obstruct the argument. For all souls are derived from the same soul, as is the All Soul, and all are in sympathy. In fact it has already been stated that soul is both one and many; there has also been a discussion of the difference of the part *vis à vis* the whole. BF

(2) Philoponus *Contra Proclum* 77,15-24

In the case of the verbal skills, if one were to imagine our minds stripped (*gumnai*) of [our] bodies, he would see that they no longer needed any [physical] organ to reveal their private thoughts to one another. They would make direct contact with each other's naked thoughts, so that there would no longer be any difference between reflecting in relation to a capacity and actively engaging with someone else on the basis of that

[same] thought, and the resulting altered state would occur in someone else, [namely,] the person who is aware of the other person's thoughts. MS

(3) Augustine *Gen. Lit.* (*Literal Interpretation of Genesis*) 12.17.34 Zycha, *CSEL* 28, 403, 4-13

It is difficult to discover and explain how the spiritual likenesses in our minds of bodily things become known to spirits who are themselves unclean, or what obstacle is imposed on our minds by the earthly body which prevents us seeing them in each other's spirits. But it is agreed by us on the basis of the surest evidence that human thoughts have been articulated by demons, although they would not tempt people, if they were able to see in them the internal form of the virtues. For example, if the devil had been able to see in Job his noble and admirable patience, he would doubtless not have been willing to be defeated in any way by the man he tempted. RRKS

(4) Augustine *City of God* 22.29 Dombart and Kalb *CCL* 48, lines 208-10

Our thoughts will also lie open to each other. For then will be fulfilled what the Apostle, [Paul, had in mind], when he said: [I Corinthians 4.5]. RRKS

(5) Evagrius *Practical Treatise* 47 Guillaumont

A sign (*sumbolon*) of the experiences (*pathêmata*) in our soul is the occurrence of an uttered word, or of a movement of the body through which our enemies [the demons] know whether we have their thoughts within us and are in labour with them, or whether we have rejected those thoughts and are concerned with our salvation. For our mind (*nous*) is known only to God who created us, who does not need signs in order to know what is hidden in our hearts. RRKS

10. Definitions of Soul

For the definition of soul as a blend or harmony of physical qualities, or a self-moving number, see under **6(a)**.

For Aristotle's rejection of Plato's description of the soul as a self-mover, see under **7**.

Plato describes the soul in *Timaeus* 34B-36D as composed out of divisible and indivisible forms of Sameness, Difference and Being. These are in turn split into two oppositely revolving circles of Sameness and Difference. Interpretations are offered in Plutarch *On the Creation of Soul in the Timaeus* (*Moralia* 1012A-1032F) and in the commentaries on the *Timaeus* of Proclus and Calcidius. See **Logic and Metaphysics 17(d)** for a 'yes and no' answer to the question whether all soul is one, which tries to trade on the soul's being composed of the divisible and the indivisible and of Sameness and Difference.

Aristotle, taking the apparently spatial character of Plato's account literally, rejects it utterly and substitutes a highly commonsensical account. His general formula, that the soul is the form or actualisation (*entelekheia*) of an organic body (*DA* 2.1, 412a19 and b5), he recognises as being a very generalised sketch, which can be filled in by studying the life-manifesting capacities one by one (2.3, 414b25-8; b32-3; 415a12-13). The soul, for Aristotle, actually *is* these capacities, as I have argued (1974). The capacities which constitute soul are first the nutritive capacity for using food to maintain and reproduce a certain bodily structure, secondly in higher life forms, the further capacities to perceive and desire, and thirdly in humans the capacity to think.

Reading

Richard Sorabji, 'Body and soul in Aristotle', *Philosophy* 49, 1974, 63-89, repr. in J. Barnes, M. Schofield, R. Sorabji, eds, *Articles on Aristotle* vol. 4, London 1979.

Plotinus rejects Aristotle's definition of the soul as the form of the body, since that implies that it cannot survive the body, and because soul is what *makes* the form in the body.

(1) Plotinus 4.7 [2] 8^5 (5-18)

If [the soul] is assimilated to [the body] with which it is associated in the way that the shape of the statue is related to the bronze, then when the body is divided, the soul will be partitioned with it, and when a part of the body is severed, a portion of the soul will join it; the withdrawal in sleep will not take place if the actualisation (*entelekheia*) must be inseparable from whatever it is the actualisation of – to be truthful there will not even be any sleep. Moreover if the soul is an actualisation there will be no rational opposition to appetite, and the whole, being in consonance with itself, will undergo one and the same affection throughout. Perhaps it is possible for only sensation to occur, and impossible for thought. That is why

the [Peripatetics] introduce another soul or intellect, which they claim is immortal. Therefore the reasoning soul must be an actualisation (if one must use the term) in a different sense from this. BF

(2) Plotinus 4.3 [27] 20 (36-9)

But [the soul] is not present either as form (*eidos*) in matter, since form in matter is inseparable [from matter]; the form comes later after the matter is already there, whereas soul makes the form in the matter, being something other than the form. RRKS

For the attempts of later Neoplatonists, not unanimous, to get around Aristotle's denial of the soul's immortality by interpreting Aristotle's Active Intellect of *DA* 3.5 as an immortal part of the human soul, see under **3(g)** above and **12(c)** below.

Despite their opposition to Aristotle's terminology of soul and form, Plotinus and Porphyry both use it, e.g. at Plotinus 3.6 [26] 4 (30-8), translated below, where Plotinus is arguing that the emotional part of the soul, being a form of a sort (*eidos ti*) acts without being acted on. The question whether soul is form is discussed in a later treatise of Plotinus, 1.1 [53] 1-6, translated below under **13(d)**. There Plotinus repeats the qualification that soul may be form of a sort (*eidos ti*, 1.1 [53] 2 (6)). At 1.1 [53] 4 (18-27) he canvasses the alternatives that it is a separable form (*khôriston eidos*), or a form more like the shape of an axe; cf. also 1.1 [53] 3 (19-20). Porphyry continues the talk of form at *Sentences* 37.

Peter Adamson has argued that the Arabic paraphrase of Plotinus, translated in the Henry-Schwyzer edition of Plotinus, systematically makes Plotinus' concept of soul closer to Aristotle's.

(3) Plotinus 3.6 [26] 4 (30-8)

But this emotional (*pathêtikon*) part of the soul is not a body, but a form of a sort (*eidos ti*). However, the appetitive part is in matter, and so is the part concerned with nutrition, growth and reproduction, which is the root and source of the appetitive and emotional form. But disturbance and in general being affected (*pathos*) cannot be present in a form. The form must stay still and its matter must take on being affected, when it does take it on, while the form causes change by being present. RRKS

(4) Plotinus 1.1 [53] 2 (5-7) and 4 (18-27), translated under **13(d)** below

After Plotinus, Wisnovsky has argued, other Neoplatonists looked for a sense in which the soul could be an actualisation (*entelekheia*) and yet separable from the body. The gloss in Alexander and Themistius of *entelekheia* as *teleiotês*, perfection, helped them to associate soul in various ways with final cause, which they found easier to treat as separable from body.

Reading

Peter Adamson, 'Aristotelianism and the soul in the Arabic Plotinus', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 2001, 211-32.

Peter Adamson, *The Arabic Plotinus*, London 2003.

E. Emilsson, 'Plotinus and soul-body dualism', in S. Everson, ed., *Psychology, Companions to Ancient Thought*, vol. 2, Cambridge 1991, 148-65.

F. Hager, 'Die Aristotelesinterpretation des Alexander von Aphrodisias und die Aristoteleskritik Plotins bezüglich der Lehre von Geist', *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 46, 1964, 174-87.

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G. Verbeke, 'Les critiques de Plotin contre l'entéléchisme d' Aristote', in *Philomathes: Studies and Essays in the Humanities in memory of Philip Merlan*, The Hague 1971, 194-222.

Robert Wisnovsky, *Avicenna's Metaphysics in Context*, London & Ithaca, NY 2003.

11. Types of Soul

11(a) Tripartite soul in humans

In his *Phaedo*, Plato appears not yet to have divided the soul into three parts, reason, high spirit and appetite, but instead to be assigning to the body the desires later ascribed to the lower parts of the soul. However, Simplicius finds a division already alluded to in the phrase at *Phaedo* 77E, 'The child in us'.

(1) Simplicius *Commentary on Epictetus* ch. 11, lines 70-4 Hadot = Dübner ch. 5, p. 31,40-6

Education in the proper sense is correction of the child in us by the teacher in us. The child in us is unreason which does not see what is beneficial and is intent only on the pleasant, like children. The teacher is reason which always applies rhythm and measure to the irrational desires in us and directs them towards what is beneficial. RRKS

Plotinus rejects Plato's distinction of appetitive and irascible parts of the soul.

(2) Plotinus 4.4 [28] 28 (49-69)

Both these [aspects of the angry part, *to thumoumenon*] are derived from the vegetal and reproductive part of the soul, which causes the body to be receptive of, for example, pleasure and pain; it is this part that makes the body bilious and bitter. So because the trace (*ikhnos*, see **11(c)**) of the soul is in such a condition, our feelings of rage and anger (*duskherantika, orgila*) are stirred, so that because it has been wronged at the outset it seeks in some way to return the wrong on whatever has perpetrated the wrong, and to bring it to the same state. It is evident that this trace of the soul is essentially of the same substance (*homoousios*) as the rest from the fact that people who are less interested in bodily pleasures and who in general despise the body are less easily moved to anger (*orgai*).

[58] The fact that trees feel no anger (*thumos*) should cause no surprise, even though they can reproduce. For they have no blood or bile. For if these were present without any faculty of perception, only seething and a sort of irritation would occur; but if there were perception then there would also be an impulse to react to the wrongdoing.

[63] We could divide the irrational part of the soul into the appetitive (*epithumêtikon*) and the irascible (*thumoeides*), the former being the vegetal part and the latter a trace emerging from it, to do with the blood or bile or the compound creature; but this would be a mistaken division since it

involves something prior and something posterior. In fact there is nothing to prevent us from saying that they are both posterior, and that the division is of traces that are derived from the same source. BF

11(b) Is there a rational soul in animals?

(i) Yes: Porphyry argues at length for the rationality (*logos*) of animals in *Abstinence* Book 3, translated by Gillian Clark in the series *Ancient Commentators on Aristotle* (cf. *Sentences* 10 and 11), distinguishing external reason, i.e. speech, from internal reason, i.e. thought (3.2; 3.3; 3.7) and arguing that animals have both. With regard to external reason, Porphyry argues that animals even understand Greek, that if we do not understand them, this is no more significant than our not understanding Indian and that when he brought up a tame partridge in Carthage, it responded with human sounds. Porphyry also reports Theophrastus, in disagreement with his mentor Aristotle, ascribing reasonings (*logismoi*) to animals.

(1) Porphyry *Abstinence* 3.3.4

And if we do not understand them, so what? Greeks do not understand Indian, nor do those brought up on Attic understand Scythian or Thracian or Syrian: the sound that each makes strikes the others like the calling of cranes. GC

(2) Porphyry *Abstinence* 3.4.4

But when animals speak to each other clearly and meaningfully, even if not all of us can understand, and are even seen to imitate us and learn Greek and understand their owners, who would be so brazen as to deny that they have language (*logos*) just because he cannot himself understand what they say? GC

(3) Porphyry *Abstinence* 3.4.7

We ourselves reared, at Carthage, a tame partridge which had flown to us, and as time went on and habit made it very tame, we observed it not only making up to us and being attentive and playing, but even speaking in response to our speech and, so far as was possible, replying, differently from the way that partridges call to each other. It did not speak when we were silent; it only responded when we spoke. GC

(4) Theophrastus *ap.* Porphyrium *Abstinence* 3.25.3

Thus also we posit that all human beings are kin (*sungeneis*) to one another, and moreover to all the animals, for the principles of their bodies are naturally the same. I say this not with reference to the primal elements (*stoikheia*), for plants too are composed of these: I mean, for instance, skin, flesh and the kind of fluids that are natural to animals. We posit this the

more strongly because the souls of animals are naturally no different, I mean in appetite and anger, and also in reasoning (*logismoi*) and above all in perception. GC

(ii) No, or not straightforwardly: We have already seen under **6(d)** that the straightforward transmigration of human rational souls into animals is denied by Iamblichus, Theodore of Asine, Syrianus, Proclus, Sallustius and Hermeias. Of these Iamblichus at least, in the passages quoted, wants to deny animals rational soul, as emerges also below under **11(d)**.

(5) Proclus *in Remp.* 2.309,28-310,6

Let us then state that we too say, absolutely in accordance with Plato's view, that soul passes into non-rational animals on account of the likeness of its life (*zôê*) [to theirs]; however it does not dwell in their bodies (for the natural structural differences between them militate against such an arrangement), but is bound together by a mere relation (*skhêsis*) between its life and their soul which animates the appropriate body, and which has no additional need of human soul. It was Theodorus of Asine who first had this intuition, and he persuaded us to think and write [this view]. RW

11(c) Image, trace, echo of soul

When Plotinus speaks of the lowest functions of soul, he sometimes prefers to talk of an image, trace, or echo of soul. Thus he describes the power that makes animals grow as a mere image (*eidôlon*) of soul, as for example in 1.1 [53] 11 (9-15).

(1) Plotinus 1.1 [53] 11 (8-15), translated above under **6(c)**

We shall see below under **11(d)** that Proclus takes this idea further. Another use of 'image' (*eidôlon*) is for a person's ghost. As explained below under **12(e)**, Homer's reference to Heracles' shade (*eidôlon*) at *Odyssey* 11.601-2 is taken by Plutarch *On the Face in the Moon* 944E-945B and Plotinus 4.3 [27] 27 to be some kind of soul. But they both believe that there is a higher Heracles as well.

Plotinus also speaks of a trace (*ikhnos*) of soul, e.g. 4.4 [28] 27-9 (see **11(a)**(2)); 2.3 [52] 9. At 4.4 [28] 29 (1-7; 12-15), the trace is what makes the hair and nails of corpses grow even after the soul has left, cf. Philoponus *in DA*, 17,9-14. At 4.4 [28] 22 (1) plants are described as having an echo of soul. At 4.4 [28] 27 (3;11) plants and earth have a trace of soul.

(2) Plotinus 4.4 [28] 22 (1), translated below under **11(f)**

(3) Plotinus 4.4 [28] 27 (3; 11), translated below under **11(f)**

(4) Plotinus 4.4 [28] 29 (1-7; 12-15)

Well then, if body is like something warmed but not like something illuminated, how does it have nothing living (*zôtikon*) about it, when the other soul has gone out of it? It does have it for a short time, but it fades

quickly, as with things warmed when they have got distant from the fire. Evidence is the hair that sprouts on corpses and the nails which grow, and animals which move for a long time when cut in two ....

Does [the living element], then, go away together with [soul], or does it perish? We ought to ask this both about the light [after the sun goes down] and about the life (*zôê*) in the body which we say is akin (*oikeios*) to body. RRKS

Reading

John Dillon, 'Plotinus – the first Cartesian?', *Hermathena* Winter 1990, 19-31, repr. in his *The Great Tradition*, Aldershot 2000.

11(d) Is all soul alike?

The idea of an image, trace, or echo of soul prevents all soul being alike, and Proclus takes this further, because he thinks that Plato's non-rational parts of the soul, and more generally human souls as embodied are mere images (*eidôla*) of soul, *Platonic Theology* 3.6. He also talks of a trace (*vestigium*) of life in animals, e.g. *de Decem Dubitationibus* 7.43, translated in **Physics 4**.

But Porphyry sees a unity in soul, because he makes it all include reason. We have just seen under **11(b)** that he makes animal soul include reason, which is not to deny that it also performs irrational functions. As for plants, he does not have to make an exception for them, because, as seen below under **11(f)**, he denies soul to plants (and embryos) altogether. Iamblichus *DA ap.* Stobaeum 1,375 comments on Porphyry's assimilation of animal soul to human soul, although 1,458 reports Porphyry's recognition that there is also irrational soul, and puzzlingly speaks (but there is a lacuna) as if this operates below human lives.

Iamblichus in passages already quoted under **6(d)** is against the unity of soul. He denies that animals have rational soul, and postulates different kinds of soul for humans and animals, Nemesius *On the Nature of Man* 2, Aeneas of Gaza *Theophrastus* 893A-B. This may be connected with the idea, documented under **4** as occurring in Plato, Alcinous, Proclus, Priscian and 'Simplicius', that where rationality is present, it permeates the lower perceptual functions.

On one interpretation, Iamblichus repeats his accusation that Porphyry makes all soul ('all such substance') homogeneous, *ap.* Stobaeum 1.365, 7-17, translated in **3(h)**. But an alternative interpretation is also provided there.

(1) Porphyry *ap.* Iamblichum *DA ap.* Stobaeum 1,375,24-8 Wachsmuth

As I have understood from certain Platonists such as Porphyry and many others, things human and animal and their characteristics are assimilated to each other, as far as nature allows things distinguished by different essences to be assimilated. RRKS

(2) Porphyry *ap.* Iamblichum *DA ap.* Stobaeum 1,458,12-14 Wachsmuth

Porphyry and his school, as far as human lives [lacuna]; and they posit another class of souls after this, the irrational. JD, JF

(3) Iamblichus *ap.* Nemesium *On the Nature of Man* 2, 35,7-17 Morani, translated under **6(d)** above

(4) Iamblichus in Aeneas of Gaza *Theophrastus* Colonna 12, 11-25, translated under **6(d)** above

(5) Proclus *Platonic Theology* 3.6 Saffrey-Westerink 23,19-25

And every soul is immortal. So it is written in the *Phaedrus*, in spite of the fact that irrational soul is mortal according to the demiurge in the *Timaeus*. More generally, it is clear from many passages that Plato equates soul with rational soul, and considers the others as images (*eidôla*) of souls, insofar as they too are intellective and principles of life, since they collaborate with the universal souls to bring about the forms of life linked to bodies. JO

11(e) Hypostasis soul, World Soul, human souls

Plotinus rejects the idea that human souls are *parts* of the World Soul (the Soul of the Universe) which makes the stars revolve, 4.3.1-8. On the contrary that is a sister soul and, like human souls, derives from (*ek, apo* 4.3 [27] 5 (15); 4.3 [27] 8 (2-3)), the hypostasis, or level of reality, soul: universal soul. The human soul and the World Soul can be called 'parts' of that hypostasis, only in the special sense in which theorems, though *derived from* a whole system, can also be called *parts* of it, 4.3 [27] 2 (49-54).

(1) Plotinus 4.3 [27] 3 (27-9)

But since the soul is rational, and rational in the way that the whole is said to be, then the so-called part (*meros*) is the same as it, and not a part of a whole. BF

(2) Plotinus 4.3 [27] 6 (10-15)

One could say that there is a distinction between souls too – more so in that the Soul of the World does not depart from the whole but remains there, cloaking itself in the body, while the others receive their portion, when the body is already in existence, under its sort of sisterly authority which prepares a home for them. BF

(3) Plotinus 4.3 [27] 2 (10-11)

We should perhaps, when discussing such matters, try to gain a clearer understanding of what is meant by 'part (*meros*)'. BF

(4) Plotinus 4.3 [27] 2 (49-58)

Is it not then a part (*meros*) in the way that a scientific theorem is said to be a part of a particular science? The science is in no way diminished, and

each division is a sort of expression and actualisation. In such a case each part potentially contains the whole science, which is thereby none the less a whole. To apply this analogy to the soul as whole and parts: the whole whose parts are of this kind would not be the soul of something, but soul pure and simple; so it would not be the soul of the World, but that too will be one of the partial (*en merei*) souls. Therefore all souls are parts of a single soul and are uniform. BF

11(f) Earth soul, plant souls, embryo souls

Empedocles (on some ancient interpretations of fragments 103, 110, 117 Diels-Kranz) and Plato (*Timaeus* 77A-C) both granted soul to plants, but on a basis rejected by Aristotle, that plants, though not self-aware, could feel. Aristotle retained the idea of soul in plants and embryos (*GA* 2.3), but only by means of his biological conception of soul as including all the life-manifesting capacities, including the purely vegetative capacity to use nutriment (*DA* 2.3) as described above under **10**. The Stoics followed by Galen disagreed, denying soul to plants and embryos (e.g. Galen *PHP* 6.3.7; *On the Natural Faculties* 1.1.1-2, translated in **Physics 1**) and Porphyry followed. So Descartes was not the first to deny vegetative soul. But he took himself to be denying the views of the ancients in general, not just Aristotle's view, and in order to remind us of his restriction of soul (*anima*) to conscious functions, he deliberately switched to the word 'mind' (*mens*), a decision that has proved very influential (Reply to objections brought against the second *Meditation* §4 in the fifth *Objections*, translated by Haldane and Ross, *Descartes, Philosophical Works*, vol. 2, p. 210).

This background left the commentators free to choose among various views. Porphyry, like the Stoics, denies of plants and embryos alike that they have soul, sensation, or appetite in the same sense as animals, and so he justifies a vegetarian diet as 'inanimate', i.e. soul-less. For Porphyry, all and only rational beings have soul, since animals have both soul and reason, plants and embryos neither. Themistius, Proclus and Damascius, by contrast, accept Plato's idea that plants have sensation, and they speak of an earth soul. Damascius goes further, when he says that stones, logs and corpses have cognition (*gnôsis*) and a dim self-awareness (*sunaisthêsis*, see **4(d)** above). Compare Proclus' account of the sense in which a plant can be said to pray, in *On the Hieratic Art*, translated in **18(c)** below.

As for Plotinus, he considers that the earth has soul, at least growth soul (*phutikê, gennêtikê*), witness the fact that stones grow in the earth. He considers whether earth also has perception and intellect (*nous*). Plants get their soul from earth, which gives them growth. However, their soul is only an echo or trace of soul, and they do not have perception, 4.4 [28] 22 (33). So far, this concept of plant soul is closer to Aristotle than to Plato. But in 3.8 [30] 1 (1-7; 17-24), Plotinus playfully (*paizein*) considers that even plants and earth engage in contemplation (*theôria*) and then develops in earnest the idea that all life is thought (*noêsis*), 3.8 [30] 8 (12-17).

Plato

(1) Plato *Timaeus* 77A3-C5

Tim.: They mixed together a nature akin to human nature, but with different shapes and modes of perception, so as to create another kind of living being. These are now what have been domesticated for us by hus-

bandry as cultivated trees and plants and seeds, of which previously only wild varieties grew, these being older than the cultivated varieties. Now everything that partakes in life is by rights most correctly called a living being. The living being which we are now discussing partakes in the third kind of soul, which we say is positioned between the midriff and the navel, and which has no share in reasoning and intelligence, but only sensation, pleasant and painful, together with appetite. It is continually affected by everything, but its creation did not allow it by nature to turn (*straphenti*) within itself about itself, repelling motion from without, while utilising its own motion, so as to observe (*katidein*) and calculate (*logizesthai*) concerning any of its own [experiences] (*ta hautou*). Hence it lives and is none other than a living being, but is stuck fast and rooted down because it lacks self-motion. RW

Porphyry

(2) Porphyry *To Gaurus* 2,1-3 Kalbfleisch, published as 'Galen' 34,11-35,21

[1] Now if the embryo has been shown to be neither an actual animal (*zôion*) (because animals differ from non-animals in perception and impulse) nor a potential animal (that is, a creature which has already received soul although the activities of the body-soul compound are inactive), it becomes easy for Plato to show the necessity for the soul's entry and the defining moment at which it happens. For it is clear that, if the embryo is not an actual or a potential animal (that is, one which has already received its condition but is inactive), and if it is called a potential animal in that it is suitable for receiving the soul, properly so called, of an animal, then when it first becomes able to perceive and to have impulses, that must be acknowledged as the soul's entry and the precise time of the soul's entry. This must happen after the natural delivery from the mother's womb.

[2] But if the embryo is a potential animal, having received its condition, or even more if it is an actual animal, it becomes difficult to define the moment of the soul's entry, and whatever moment is selected will be a very unconvincing invention. One option is the moment when the sperm has been deposited, as if it could not be retained in the womb for reproduction unless a soul coming from outside had achieved the union [of the male and female contributions] by its entry. Numenius has much to say on this, and so do the exponents of allegory in Pythagoras, who interpret as the sperm the river which Plato calls Ameles, Hesiod and the Orphics call the Styx, and Pherekydes the efflux. Another option is to locate the entry at the moment when the embryo is first formed: thirty days for male children, forty-two for female, according to Hippocrates [*On the Nature of the Child* 18]. Or the moment of entry could be defined as the time when the embryo first moves, and on this Hippocrates says 'When the extremities of the baby's body have budded externally and the nails and hair have taken root,

the baby also begins to move; this takes three months for males and four for females.' [*On the Nature of the Child* 21]

[3] I have even heard someone maintain that the ardour of the male in intercourse, and the response of the womb, seize a soul from the surrounding air by the inhalation which happens when they modify, with the property of attracting a soul, the nature of the sperm as provider. This soul rushes through the male organ, as if through a pipe, together with the sperm, and is then collected by the ardour in the womb when the womb is in the right condition for retaining the sperm. That is why both combine, because the fettering and imprisonment of the soul is done by both, and the experience is called 'conception' (*sullêpsis*) because it is like the capture of a bird. I know that I laughed then at these stories, and I have thought them worthy of mention not because the fiction deserves any serious consideration, but to show that the manner [of ensoulment] can acquire any number of deviations if you refuse to locate the soul's entry after delivery from the womb, and assign the event to that which is still within the womb in all its obscurity. GC

(3) Porphyry *ap.* Iamblichum *DA ap.* Stobaeum 1,381,2-23 Wachsmuth

According to Hippocrates the Asclepiad, life is actually created and the soul becomes present when the sperm is formed into an embryo (for it is then suitably disposed to share in life); while according to Porphyry it is as soon as the child is born. Some other opinion might arise, not expressed as yet, that there are very many powers and essential properties of the soul and that at critical moments, in different ways at different times, when the body that is coming into being is suited to do so, it partakes first of the vegetative life, then of sensation, then of the appetitive life, then of the rational soul, and lastly of the intellectual soul. These are the many opinions concerning the times at which the soul becomes associated in a natural union with the body.

Now, on the topic of the entry of souls, we are investigating how the soul enters into the body. One opinion, that the soul is drawn in from those in the surrounding atmosphere during what is called 'conception', has three variants: the soul is drawn in either because of the desire of the begetter through breathing in, or because of the desire of the womb that receives the sperm when the womb is suitably disposed to retain it, or because of the united desire of both when, by jointly breathing together, they possess the property of drawing the soul in since the nature of the sperm is also excited. JD, JF

(4) Porphyry *Abstinence* 1.46.2

Find me someone who is eager to live, so far as is possible, in accordance with intellect and to be undistracted by the passions that affect the body and let him demonstrate that meat-eating is easier to provide than dishes

of fruits and vegetables; that meat is cheaper to prepare than inanimate (*apsukhos*) food for which chefs (*mageiroi*) are not needed at all; that, compared with inanimate food it is intrinsically pleasure-free and lighter on digestion, and more quickly assimilated by the body than vegetables; that it is less provocative of desires, and less conducive to obesity and robustness than a diet of inanimate food. GC

(5) Porphyry *Abstinence* 1.47.2

A person who has accustomed himself to being satisfied with the minimum has got rid not just of one thing but of thousands: excess of riches, the service of too many slaves, a mass of belongings, a condition of somnolence, intensity and frequency of illness, need for doctors, provocation of sexual desire, thicker exhalations, much residue, heavy chains, robustness which prompts action, an Iliad of evils. An inanimate (*apsukhos*), simple diet, available to all, takes these away from us, offering peace for the reasoning power which provides us with security. GC

(6) Porphyry *Abstinence* 3.21.2

Indeed [the irrational] is important and abundant in everything that lacks a soul, and we need no other antithesis to the rational; but everything inanimate, being irrational and without intellect, is thereby the opposite of that which has, together with soul, *logos* and thought. GC

(7) Porphyry *Sentences* 12

'Life' also is one of those words that has many senses; for 'life' has one meaning in the case of a plant, another in the case of an animate being, and another in the case of an intellective (*noeros*) being; one in the case of nature, another in that of soul, another in that of intellect .... JD

Plotinus

(8) Plotinus 4.4 [28] 22 (1-46)

In the case of plants is that which is, so to speak, echoed (*epanêkheisthai*) in their bodies one thing, and that which supplies it another – the appetitive part in us, the vegetative in them? Or is it the case that this is to be found in the earth (which has a soul in it) and that what is derived from this is what is in plants?

[5] One should first ask what the soul in the earth is; is it derived from the sphere of the universe, which alone Plato seems to endow primarily with soul, like illumination pouring out on the earth? Or rather when he calls earth 'the first and oldest of the gods within the heavens' is he giving it the same sort of soul as he does to the stars? For how could it be a god if

it did not have this sort of soul? The upshot is that it is difficult to settle the matter, and a greater, or at least no less a problem is caused by Plato's account of what happened.

[13] First then we should consider how the question might reasonably be settled.

One could take the plant growing from the earth as evidence that it possesses a vegetal soul. But since many living creatures are seen to come from the earth too, what stops us from claiming that it is a living creature as well? And if it is so great a living creature and no small part of the universe, what prevents us from asserting that it has intelligence and is for that reason a god? If this is true of each of the stars, why should it not also be true of the earth, which is a living part of a living universe? For we should certainly not agree that it is held together from outside by an alien soul and that it does not contain a soul within itself on the grounds that it cannot have a soul of its own. For why should only fiery spheres have souls, and not the sphere made of earth? For all are corporeal, and stars lack sinews, flesh, blood and moisture, while earth is more varied and made up of all the elements. If it is objected that the earth is immobile, then one could reply that this refers only to lack of local movement. But what about sensation?

[27] Well, do the stars have sensation? For sensation is not a property of flesh, and we do not at all need to endow soul with body for it to have sensation, but rather we need to endow body with soul for it to exist and be preserved. Soul is able to make judgments; because it has regard for the body it makes its judgments about the affections of the body.

[32] But what are the affections of the earth, and what are the judgments made about? For plants, in so far as they are of the earth, have no sensations. So what are its sensations of, and through what does it have them?

[34] Well, should we not have the courage to say that sensations can take place without any organs of sense? Furthermore what benefit would sensation bring it? Certainly not the acquisition of knowledge; for the knowledge gained from thinking is, I imagine, sufficient for those beings which have no benefit to gain from sensation. In fact noone would agree to that. For quite apart from any benefit, knowledge in the sensible world can be quite edifying – for example knowledge of the sun, the other heavenly bodies, the heavens themselves and the earth. Our sensations of all these are pleasant in themselves. We must consider that question later. Our immediate problem is to discover, if the earth has sensations, what they are of and how they occur. Or rather we should go back to certain prior difficulties and answer the general questions whether there can be sensation without organs and whether sensation must be for some benefit, even if there is some outcome other than a beneficial one. BF

(9) Plotinus 4.4 [28] 27 (1-17)

If [the earth] gives to plants their generative soul – whether it gives the generative soul itself or whether that remains in the earth and some trace

(*ikhnos*) of it is passed on to plants – then in this way too plants would be ensouled in the way that our flesh is, and would have acquired any generative soul they possess in themselves. Soul is present in the body of the plant and gives to it that superior factor by which it differs from a piece that has been broken off and can no longer be considered a plant but just a fragment of wood. But what does soul give to the actual body of the earth?

We should realise that a fragment of the earth, even though it remains in contact with it, is not of the same nature; the behaviour of stones is evidence of this, for as long as they are embedded in the earth they grow in size, but once they are dug up they remain at the size they were when removed.

We should therefore draw the following three conclusions. First each part of the earth contains some trace [of the generative soul] and that the whole principle of growth, which belongs not to any particular part but to the whole, is diffused over it. Secondly the nature of the sensitive faculty is not 'kneaded in with the body (Plato *Phaedo* 66B5)' but a sort of passenger riding it. Thirdly the rest of the soul is Intellect which men, using religious terminology and a nature which interprets such things, call Hestia and Demeter. BF

(10) Plotinus 3.8 [30] 1 (1-7; 17-24)

Before entering into a serious discussion let us first indulge in a little fanciful (*paizein*) speculation, and suggest that all things desire contemplation (*theôria*) and look to this as their goal – not only rational beings but also irrational animals, the nature in plants and the earth that produces them – and further that they succeed in so far as their nature allows them to, so that each thing in its own way contemplates and is successful, some reaching the true goal, others only an imitation or copy of it.

Let us now deal with the earth itself, trees and plants in general. What is their contemplation (*theôria*)? How are we to relate what the earth produces and creates to the activity of contemplation? How can Nature, which is said to be lacking imagination and reason, possess contemplation within itself? How can it produce what it produces through a contemplation which it does not possess? BF

(11) Plotinus 3.8 [30] 8 (12-17)

So if an object of contemplation or thought is to be alive, it must enjoy a life that is life itself, not one that is vegetative or perceptive or psychic in any other way. For these other forms of life are in a way thoughts, but they are either vegetative or perceptive of psychic thoughts.

How can they be thoughts?

Because they are rational forming principles. All life is in a way thought, and like life, thought has varying degrees of unclarity. BF

Themistius

(12) Themistius *in Metaph. 12* in Averroes *in Metaph. 12* Bouyges 3.1493-4, translated from Arabic

There is no doubt that proportions and forms have previously been put into nature and that it produces what it produces according to them. Although man is only begotten from man, the father exerts no craftsmanship in his composition of this, which cannot be in another state better than the state he is in. He comes to be in this state only because of the proportions and forms which have been put into the nature of each of the substances, not by reason of any craftsmanship on the part of the father, but as a result of the proportions. The body has no action upon a body, except only on its surface, but nature works on the whole frame of the body, and no wonder if nature does not understand the movement of its work towards a definite end, since it does not know and does not think about its work. This shows that these proportions are somehow inspired by a cause nobler, worthier and higher in rank than themselves, i.e. the soul in the earth which Plato thought had been produced by the secondary gods and Aristotle by the sun and the ecliptic. CG

Proclus

(13) Proclus *in Tim.* 2,83,30-84,5

The final kind of sensation involves the presence of a very obscure cognition, and it is primarily a passive experience rather like a natural sympathetic reaction, yielding no recognition of the types of sense object, e.g. that what acts is hot or cold, but only that what befalls is pleasant or painful. For Timaeus will go on to offer us the view that the sensation of plants is like that, being an apprehension only of the pleasant or painful feeling consequent upon the sense objects. HT

Damascius

(14) Damascius *On Plato's Philebus* para. 6, lines 4-6 Westerink

Neither the things beyond Intellect, nor the things this side of irrational animals have cognition, or, if you like, this side of plants, since Plato grants sensation to them. RRKS

(15) Damascius *On First Principles* vol. 2, 153,20-154,6 Westerink-Combès

And that is why every form (*eidos*) is accompanied by some cognition (*gnôsis*) of some magnitude, and every form is a living thing or a corpse of a living thing that has lost its living character together with its form, for

example stones, logs, and corpses, since at least if they conform to nature, they are living things and have some self-awareness (*sunaisthêsis*, see **4(d)** above). For plants too are living things of a kind, Plato says [*Timaeus* 77A-C], and rocks and metals and earth in general, and each of the other [three] elements are shown not to be altogether without soul (*apsukha*) by the [spontaneous] generation of animals within them and by the perfection of the forms they create (*eidopoiia*). RRKS

Reading

Richard Sorabji, 'Body and soul in Aristotle', *Philosophy* 49, 1974, 63-89, repr. in J. Barnes, M. Schofield, R. Sorabji, eds, *Articles on Aristotle*, vol. 4, London 1979, 42-64.

Richard Sorabji, *Animal Minds and Human Morals*, London & Ithaca, NY 1993, ch. 8.

11(g) Attitudes to the earth

This subject is nowadays addressed under the modern heading of environmental ethics.

The Presocratic philosopher Empedocles has primitive humans spring out of the earth, fr. 62 Diels-Kranz from Simplicius *in Phys.* 381,31-382,3, and Plato's myth in *Statesman* 269B-271C has 'earth-born' humans emerge from the earth in the period when the universe has a reversed direction of spin. Plato speaks of the earth as our nurse, *Tim.* 40B-C, and like a mother, *Laws* 740A5-7. Even the sober Aristotle, as Devin Henry points out, makes a large proportion of animals, though not humans, arise out of mud, and while discussing this theory of spontaneous generation, refers, like Plato, to the myth of the earth-born, *GA* 3.11, 762b25.

Plotinus holds that all things have to create by contemplating, 3.8[30] 4 (40), even the earth which generates plants. We have seen in **11(f)** that it too contemplates in a weak way, and is ascribed a kind of soul, while it also gives a kind of soul to plants.

Although Porphyry does not ascribe soul to plants or earth, he does approve, and ascribe to Aristotle's successor Theophrastus, celebration of the earth as nurse and mother who gave us birth, an idea that goes well beyond Aristotle.

(1) Porphyry *Abstinence* 2.32.1, reporting Theophrastus

The first and greatest help is that from crops, and from this alone we should make offerings to the gods and to the earth which produces them. Earth is the common hearth of gods and people, and everyone, leaning upon her as a nurse and mother, must hymn her and love her as the one who gave us birth (*tiktein*). GC

As regards the effect of human constructions on the earth, Hughes point out that the historian Herodotus thinks of Xerxes as incurring divine punishment for bridging the Hellespont, breaching the isthmus of Athos, drinking the rivers dry with his army and burning groves, *Histories* Book 7, while another breaching of an isthmus was aborted, according to Pausanias *Description of Greece* 2.1.5, after a Delphic warning. On the other hand, mining is often spoken of as something intended by divine Providence, except insofar as it encourages greed, by Cicero *ND* 2.98; 2.151; 2.162; *Div.* 1.116; *Off.* 2.13, and Seneca *Ep.* 23,5; 90,12; 115,11; *Ben.*

4.6.1. Theophrastus is different in expressing no religious or moral sentiment, when he notices the effect on climate of the human activities of draining and irrigating, *On the Causes of Plants* 5.14.

Reading

Gabriela Carone, 'The classical Greek tradition', in Dale Jamieson, ed., *A Companion to Environmental Philosophy*, Oxford 1988, ch. 5.

Gabriela Carone, 'Plato and the environment', *Environmental Ethics* 1998, 115-33.

Devin Henry, 'Themistius and spontaneous generation in Aristotle's *Metaphysics*', *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 24, 2003, 183-207.

J. Donald Hughes, 'Ecology in Ancient Greece', *Inquiry* 18, 1975, 115-25.

12. Immortality of Soul

12(a) Discontinuity of body

The subject of immortality has already been partly handled under **8(e)**, and is more fully treated in **Logic and Metaphysics 6(h)**. The latter compares the Christian belief in resurrection with the Stoic belief, attacked by Alexander, in the eternal recurrence of the universe. Both beliefs were confronted with the question whether we could resume bodily existence after an interruption, and the discussion of them in antiquity was to some extent parallel. The belief in bodily reincarnation, which also involves an interruption, was subjected to a different set of problems, some of which have been discussed above **6(c)** and **(d)**. The present chapter is concerned more with the soul than with the body.

12(b) Does the soul survive?

Because the soul for Aristotle is merely the capacities of the living organism, he takes the stark view, if Alexander's interpretation is right, that the human soul perishes immediately at death. Only the Epicurean school shares this stark belief. But the Stoics also deny that any human souls last all the way through to the next recurrence of history.

Reading

On Aristotle's soul as capacities of a living organism: Richard Sorabji, 'Body and soul in Aristotle', *Philosophy* 49, 1974, 63-84, repr. in J. Barnes, M. Schofield, R. Sorabji, eds, *Articles on Aristotle* vol. 4, London 1979.

But what about the active or productive intellect, which is said to be immortal at *DA* 3.5, 430a23? Because Alexander interprets the active intellect in Aristotle (*DA* 3.5) as being God, temporarily resident in us, its immortality lends no immortality to us. Those of a more Platonist stripe, however, e.g. Themistius, Plutarch of Athens and 'Philoponus' author of *in DA 3*, say that the productive intellect is part of the *human* soul, so that humans do have an immortal part after all. Only Marinus is recorded as making the productive intellect angelic or daemonic, rather than human, by 'Philoponus' *in DA 3*, 535,4-539,17. All these texts are translated or cross-referenced above in **3(g)**.

However, Themistius *in DA* 103,32-104,6; 104,14-23, 'Philoponus' *in DA* 538,32-539,7, translated above in **3(g)**, and Philoponus *in de Intellectu* 52,17-29; 91,40-9, having conceded humanity, deny or contemplate denying individuality to the immortal productive intellect, thereby anticipating the later denial of individuality even to the material intellect by Averroes' *Long Commentary on On the Soul*. What is immortal, on the view of 'Philoponus' and Philoponus, is only the succession of human intellects, not any individual ones.

In order to insist on the *individuality* of the immortal human intellect, Thomas appealed to Themistius *in DA* 103,32-104,6, on *illuminated* intelects, translated above in **3(g)**. See also **Logic and Metaphysics 17(d)** and **(e)**, **18(c)** and **(d)**.

12(b) Does the soul survive?

Some of those who interpreted Aristotle's human intellect as immortal were guided by their wish to harmonise Aristotle with Plato, partly under pressure from Christian charges of pagan disagreement. By an irony, the anti-Christian harmonisation of Aristotle with Plato concerning the immortality of the soul helped to make Aristotle safe for Christianity in the time of Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth century. Harmonisation is further impeded by the problem illustrated in the next section, that Plato sometimes speaks as if not just intellect, but also non-rational parts of the soul survive death, at least for a time.

Reading
On the harmony of Plato and Aristotle, see **Logic and Metaphysics 2(a)**, and:
Richard Sorabji, ed., *Aristotle Transformed*, London & Ithaca, NY 1990: summary in ch. 1, at pp. 3-5; translation of P. Hadot's path-breaking article, ch. 6.

There is a further problem, that at *DA* 2.1, 413a8-9, Aristotle says that it is not yet clear whether the way in which the soul is the actuality (*entelekheia*) of the body is like the way in which the sailor actualises the defining functions of the ship. This might seem to suggest that it is not yet clear whether after all the soul can survive separation from the body, as a sailor (Alexander *DA* 15,10 would prefer to say 'art of navigation') can from a ship. Although Alexander denies the possibility, Themistius *in DA* 43,30-5, 'Simplicius' *in DA* 96,3-10 and Philoponus *in DA* 224,28-37 allow it and think that Aristotle's concession concerns the intellectual part of the human soul. Aristotle has just said that *part* of the soul (intellect) might be separable from body, if it was not the actuality of any body, and now he adds that the same is true if the part actualises the body in the way that a sailor actualises the defining functions of a ship. Philoponus explains that the navigator, as one who is exercising the activities of navigator, cannot exercise those in separation from the ship, but at the same time as a human, is something separate from the ship and can separate himself from it. This is clearer than the distinction of 'Simplicius' between using the ship or body altogether and using it merely as a subservient instrument, while remaining separated (*exêirêmenôs*).

(1) Philoponus *in DA* 224,28-37

For it is even possible in a way, as I have already said, to say that even the rational soul is inseparable from the body, insofar as it is an actualisation (*entelekheia*). For the activities by which it perfects the living being, moving it this way and that, it possesses as activities inseparable from the body, since after going out of the body, it will no longer exercise with these activities. So in this way, insofar as it is an actualisation, I mean in respect of these activities, it would be inseparable from the body, as the activities of the navigator, qua navigator, are inseparable from the ship. He is separated as a human being, but in action as a navigator, he is simultaneously separated from the ship and possesses activities of this sort as something defunct. RRKS

12(c) How much of the soul survives?

Plato in the *Timaeus* calls the non-rational parts of the soul mortal, but in the *Phaedrus* shows even the gods as having these parts. It has been suggested that Plato's *Statesman* 309C may imply the first view, *Laws* 10, 896Eff. the second view.

Reading
Gabriela Carone, 'Teleology and evil in *Laws* 10', *Review of Metaphysics* 48, 1994.

Proclus reports conflicting earlier views, drawn from the Middle Platonists, Porphyry and Iamblichus, on whether the non-rational soul and the pneumatic vehicle survive death. On one view, both have a physical composition. Proclus himself, following Syrianus, argues that Plato describes punishments after death and the choice of a next life, to be lived sometimes in the body of a non-rational animal, and all these require some continuation of the non-rational soul and its vehicle, but not for ever. The pneumatic vehicle lasts only until the completion of one cycle of incarnations and return to the start (*apokatastasis*, *in Tim.* 3.237,5) according to Plato *Philebus* 248E-249D, which is why Plato calls the non-rational parts of the soul mortal. There are ten incarnations in ten thousand years. Philoponus adds that *proairesis*, deliberate choice, is shed, since it belongs to the rational soul intertwined with the irrational, but will (*boulêsis*) survives. See further his *in DA* 16,26-17,19.

(1) Proclus *in Tim.* 3.234,8-238,23

[Plato *Timaeus* 41C-D]: 'For the rest, you are to weave the mortal onto the immortal.' What the immortal here is, and what the mortal, are objects of enquiry for Plato's interpreters. Some, leaving only the rational soul to be immortal, destroy the whole non-rational soul and the pneumatic vehicle of the soul, giving them existence only by virtue of the soul's declination into coming to be, and keeping intellect alone immortal, as the only thing that both remains and is made like the gods and is not destroyed: so the older commentators and those who judge it right to follow the text in which Plato destroys the non-rational soul and calls it 'mortal' – I mean people like Atticus, Albinus etc.

[234,18] But those who, like Porphyry's school, are more moderate than these and more gentle plead that the so-called destruction is the scattering of the vehicle and the non-rational soul; they say that they are reduced to elements and dissolved in a way into the spheres from which it fell to them to be composed, and that they are mixtures kneaded (*phuramata*) together out of the heavenly spheres, and that the soul collects them together as it descends; so that they both are and are not [the same? – Ed.], and they are no longer each the very individuals (*auta hekasta*), nor does their distinctive character (*idiotês*) remain (*diamenein*). And they think it right to follow the *Chaldaean Oracles* [47] which say that in its descent the soul collects it [sc. the non-rational] together, taking a part of aether, 'of Sun and Moon and what swims along with air'. In their support one should adduce the Platonic texts that do not plainly destroy the whole non-rational part.

[234,32] Thirdly there are those who remove all destruction both from

the vehicle and from the non-rational, and who bring together both the remaining of the vehicle and that of the non-rational, interpreting 'mortal' as its being corporeal in form and agitated about matter and concerned about mortals. That is the opinion of Iamblichus and those who think it fit to sing his tune, and who do not give it existence simply from the divine bodies, so that being generated out of changing causes it would be also changeable in its own nature, but [make it have existence] from the gods themselves who set the cosmos straight and make all things in an everlasting way.

[235,9] [The view of Syrianus and Proclus] In addition to all these various opinions, there has arrived an account which accepts 'mortal' straight off and chimes in both with the facts and with all Plato's teachings. For that Plato wants to preserve the non-rational life even after the destruction of the material body he makes clear to us in the places where he says that the soul is actually punished in Hades on account of anger (*thumoi*) and appetites (*epithumiai*), since it would be in no need of punishment if it was removed from all emotions (*pathê*) (for it would be pure reason), and that in advance of the body in the choices of lives it chooses the life of a tyrant out of greed for sensuous satisfaction, or the life of a sophist or a mob leader out of greed for fame [Plato *Republic* 10, 619B-E; *Phaedrus* 248E], and does these things when it first descends from heaven as a newly completed soul. And that he also preserves the soul's vehicle as eternal is plain. For he has the souls in Hades using their own vehicles (for 'Mounting', says Socrates in the *Phaedo* [113D] 'the vehicles that are there for them', they are carried across the river), and now he has the vehicle generated by the Creator – for it is he that 'places the soul in a vehicle' [*Tim.* 41D-E] in likeness to the divine souls. And how can the soul be part of the cosmos otherwise than by having a vehicle in the universe? Everything which belongs to the cosmos has a seat and a position in the cosmos and fills up a part of it. Is the particular soul, then, better before the fitting with the vehicle or worse? If better, it will be more divine than the universal souls, to which the Creator gives vehicles. But if worse, how when it has been generated does he place it immediately in a vehicle? Eternal things start not from what is contrary to nature but from what is in accordance with it.

[236,5] That this, then, is what Plato thought, is clear. But since he here [*Tim.* 41C-D] explicitly calls what is woven on by the gods in the cosmos 'mortal', what are we to say about that? Shall we say, as some people do, that he both says that the life in the vehicle is woven on by the young gods and calls it 'mortal' because it is corporeal in form and occupied with what is mortal? And where does Plato call this thing which is woven on by the young gods 'immortal' if we are to understand 'mortal' here in this way? And why has he given us the general statement, that the Creator is himself responsible for things that are immortal, and handed over the generation of mortal things to them? After the handing over of creation, at any rate, the young gods are creators of mortal things only.

[236,18] So shall we say this, as some do, that the same thing both remains and is dissolved through the reduction to elements, and on this

account is both mortal and not mortal? But this is in itself absurd. When the unity has perished, how can we say that the same thing still remains? The non-rational soul is not a collection of lives, but one multiform life. Furthermore, on this showing the heavenly bodies admit of subtractions and additions, which is totally alien to them. So shall we leave it that this life is destructible, being scattered along with the body? But what, then, of the punishments, the purifications, the choices of lives, choices made in accordance some with imagination (*phantasia*), some with anger (*thumos*), some with appetite (*epithumia*)? What of the descents into non-rational animals? It is through the non-rational that there is contact with the non-rational, as through intellect with intellect.

[236,31] Perhaps, then, it is better to say, with our teacher [Syrianus], that *pneuma* embraces the summits of the non-rational life, and that these summits, with the vehicle, are eternal inasmuch as they are produced by the Craftsman, but that when they are drawn out and divided into parts they make this [non-rational] life which the young gods weave on, a life which is mortal because the soul must necessarily at some time shed this division into parts (*merismos*), when it meets with purification and returns to the start of its cycle (*apokathistanai*), but the life is more long-lasting than the life of this body. That is why the soul has this sort of life even in Hades and in choosing lives. For it is in the declination itself that it acquires this mortal life from the young gods. If this prevails, then, the Creator gives existence to the summit of the non-rational life, but he does not give existence to that life itself; since also when he gives existence to the daemons it is clear that he produces non-rational life in them too, but not this non-rational life which the young gods weave onto us; for that is peculiar to those souls only that fall into coming to be. WC

[237,15] For the gods, then, irradiate their vehicles with lives of a rational sort, since they have intellective souls, while daemons who are distinctly defined by reason also use irrational powers, though controlling them. Our souls, which are much more possessed of the life in the vehicles which is irrational compared with their lives, also go further by adding another irrational life which is an extension from the life in the *pneuma* which the young gods weave on [Plato *Tim.* 41A-D]. All that [our souls] possess in imitation of the universal ones [see narrative preceding **18(b)** (12) below] is immortal, but the addition of the second life is of a mortal sort. The single perception in the former which is not acted on (*apathês*) generates in the pneumatic vehicle perception which is single but acted on (*pathêtikê*), and this generates the perceptions in the oyster-like body which are many and acted on. Also the single desiderative (*orektikê*) capacity in the former created the several desiderative capacities in the pneuma which have something separate from the oyster-like body and can be educated. But these created the lowest enmattered desiderative capacities in this body. RRKS

[237,31] But since the parts act along with the universals, necessarily too the gods are causes prior by a long way to these powers that are

secondary workers, and the powers of the soul produce along with them the things that are proportional to themselves, which is why they [sc. the gods] inspire them and empower them. And that he himself [sc. the Creator] gives a certain vehicle to the soul is clear from this passage; for 'he places it', he says a little later [*Tim.* 41D-E], 'as in a vehicle' making it part of the cosmos and a citizen of the universe. But it should be known that he gives existence to the non-rational soul also before the body. If that were not so, one of two things would be the case: either having produced it in that vehicle [sc. the pneumatic vehicle] and having installed it there, he would not have produced it any longer [afterwards] in another [lower] vehicle, or he gives it existence only in this [material] body. But if the latter, it would reasonably be called 'mortal', and we have no way of still preserving the things said about it elsewhere, I mean the choices of lives, the punishments in Hades, in which the non-rational soul is definitely present. If, on the other hand, we say that this [sc. the non-rational soul] too is in the vehicle, it will of necessity be immortal, and the account that makes this too immortal will prevail, and it will no longer be true that the one Creator is responsible for the immortal, and the many creators, those given the task of creating mortals, for mortals. But if it is shown, as we have said, that the young gods produce the non-rational soul and another pneumatic vehicle before the body, which is what Aristotle too understands, coming out along with the immortal in us and entering along with it, but nevertheless mortal, all the things that produced difficulties for us are resolved. WC

Philoponus makes will (*boulêsis*), but not deliberate choice (*proairesis*) a permanent capacity of soul.

(2) Philoponus *in DA* 12,15-22

Therefore we shall demonstrate each of the points we have mentioned: that the whole soul is incorporeal and that only the rational soul is separable from all body and for this reason immortal; and that the irrational soul is separable from this coarse body, but inseparable from the *pneuma*; and furthermore [sc. we shall inquire] whether this pneumatic body exists at all and [sc. we shall demonstrate] that it continues to exist for a certain time after its departure from this body; and that the vegetative soul has its existence in this coarse body and perishes along with it. JDud, KV

(3) Philoponus *in DA* 5,26-32

Will (*boulêsis*) belongs to the rational soul on its own, whereas deliberate choice (*proairesis*) to the rational soul twined together with irrationality. For when the soul is outside becoming, it acts according to will only. For it is in the good alone. But when it enters into becoming, since the irrational faculties are combined with it on account of the causes which we shall state, then, by the interweaving of the irrational soul, it possesses deliber-

ate choice: and that is why sometimes it ends up on the side of irrationality and sometimes on the side of reason, and chooses one instead of the other. JDud, KV

Damascius summarises the later Greek thinkers in general.

(4) Damascius *in Phaed.* I, §177 Westerink

Some, like Numenius, extend immortality from the rational soul as far as the animate tenor (*hexis*); others, like Plotinus somewhere [4.7 [2]14] as far as nature; others, like Xenocrates and Speusippus among the older philosophers, and of more recent people Iamblichus and Plutarch [of Athens], as far as the irrational life; others, like Proclus and Porphyry, as far as the rational soul only; others, like many of the Peripatetics, as far as intellect only, because they make opinion perish; others extend immortality as far as universal soul, because they make particular souls perish into the universal. RRKS

12(d) Circular time and rejuvenation

Proclus interprets Plato's claim at *Parmenides* 141A-B that whatever is becoming older than itself must also be becoming younger than itself. The souls of the stars and planets are said by Proclus to become younger in a different way: because their time is circular, they can be considered to be growing younger, advancing towards the beginning of the time cycle. They differ from human souls because their movements actually constitute time (Plato *Timaeus* 39D1; 38E4-5: I take Plato to be thinking of *measured* time), so when the planets return to their original alignments, time ends and begins (*sunapokatastasis*, Proclus *in Tim.* 3.84,1, translated in **Physics 11(b)**).

(1) Proclus *in Parm.* 1226,38-1227,14

That, then, which enjoys cyclical activity partakes in time by circuits, and since the same point is for it both an end and a beginning of motion, in so far as it departs from a beginning, it becomes older, whereas in sofar as it arrives at an end, it becomes younger; for as it comes to be nearer to its end, it comes to be nearer to its own beginning; and that which comes to be nearer to its own beginning becomes younger; so then, that which arrives cyclically at its end becomes younger, while at the same time and by the same process also becoming older; for that which draws near to its own end proceeds towards being older; so for that which has a beginning different from its end, becoming younger is different from becoming older; but for that of which its beginning is the same as its end, its youngness is no younger than it is older, but as Plato says, 'It becomes simultaneously younger than itself and older [*Parm.* 141B].' For that which is moved in a straight line does not have this characteristic, because end and beginning are different in its case, whereas that which moves in a circle has the

quality of being younger than itself by reason of the fact that its motion comes about in relation to the same point as both beginning and as end. So then, everything that partakes in time, if it becomes older than itself, also becomes younger than itself; and what is of this sort is that which moves in a circle. GM, JD

12(e) What is remembered?

Plotinus asks to what extent one remembers one's past life or lives after death. The soul that has come to be in the intelligible world will not remember that it engaged in Philosophy or that it is Socrates. Indeed, if the intelligible world is timeless, memory is impossible there, 4.4 [28] 1 (1-14); 4.4 [28] 2 (1-3); 4.4 [28] 5 (11-13). But in the heavens below the intelligible world, souls can remember either the intelligible world, 4.4 [28] 3 (1-7); 4.4 [28] 5 (22-5), or the earthly world. The latter is how souls recognise each other, 4.4 [28] 5 (11-22); Proclus *in Remp.* 2.165,22-6.

On one interpretation, Aristotle's 'we do not remember' *DA* 3.5, 430a23, addresses the same subject. See the note in R.D. Hicks' commentary, and Themistius *in DA* 102,1-24; 'Philoponus' *in DA 3*, 541,20-542,5. Themistius explains that the productive intellect takes no impressions, while the passive intellect perishes.

An important text was Homer *Odyssey* 11.601-2, where Heracles' shade (*eidôlon*) turns out to be in Hades, while he himself (*autos*) is with the gods, an ancient example of the currently fashionable problem of personal fission. Plutarch of Chaeroneia (the Middle Platonist, not the Athenian Neoplatonist) and Plotinus both identify the shade with the soul. Heracles himself they identify respectively with intellect and with the more divine soul. Plotinus says it is the latter which makes us what we are (*kath' hên hêmeis*), but the shade is us (*hêmas*), 4.3 [27] 27 (1-8). The souls of those attached to bodily actions tend to remember, like shades, what they did in life, Plutarch *On the Face Appearing in the Orb of the Moon* 944E-945B; Plotinus 4.3 [27] 27; 4.3 [27] 32 (24-7); Proclus *in Remp.* 1.119,23-120,15. It is a little odd to have such a practical man as Heracles classed on the other side, but Proclus says that this is because he had been purified, and Plotinus explains that his practical life is what accounts for his having a shade in Hades as well as himself living with the immortal gods. See **11(c)** above for *eidôlon* of soul in another context.

(1) Plotinus 4.3 [27] 32 (1) – 4.4 [28] 1 (14)

Q: What about memories of our friends, our children and our spouses? What about those of our country and all the things that it would not be absurd for a refined (*asteios*) citizen to remember?

A: The answer is that one part of us remembers each of these things with emotion, while the refined citizen has his memories of them without emotion (*apathôs*). For the emotion perhaps takes place initially in the former, and what is more refined in the emotions belongs to the virtuous soul in so far as it shares anything with the former. It is fitting for the inferior soul to aspire to the memory of the activities of the higher soul, particularly when it is itself refined; for some souls can become better even

from the outset because of the guidance of the superior soul, which must in turn be ready to forget what it receives from the lower soul.

[11] For it could be the case that the superior soul is morally good, but that the other soul is by nature inferior and only kept under forcible control by the superior. The more urgently the soul rises, the more it will forget – unless of course its whole life on earth has been such that its memories are only of what is nobler. For on earth 'it is noble to detach oneself from human concerns' [Plato *Phaedrus* 249C-D]; this must also be the case with its memories. So in this sense it would be right to call the good soul forgetful. Furthermore, it escapes from plurality, reducing it to a unity by rejecting the indeterminate. For it is in this way that it avoids plurality, and is unencumbered, in charge of itself. For even while it is still on earth it rejects everything alien in its desire to be in the higher world. When it is in the heavens it retains even more. Heracles might tell of his brave deeds while in the heavens; but when he is taken to a holier place and arrives in the intelligible world he will consider them insignificant, triumphing over the other Heracles in the contests in which the wise compete.

[4.4 [28] 1 (1)] *Q*: What then will it say? What will the soul remember when it arrives in the intelligible and transcendent world?

A: Well, it is consistent to say that it contemplates the contents of the world it is now in, and that its activity is concerning them; otherwise it could not be there.

Q: So will it remember nothing of the things on earth, for example that it thought philosophically, or even that when on earth it contemplated the upper world?

A: If it is not possible, when one apprehends anything in thought, to do anything other than think and contemplate it (the awareness of having thought is not included; one would say that this awareness, if it occurs, occurs later on and is part of a development), then it would not be possible for anyone who is purely in the intelligible world to have memories of what he had done on earth. And if all thought is timeless, as it seems to be, since the Beings of that world are in eternity, not time, then it would be impossible to have memories in that world, not only of events on earth but of anything at all. BF

(2) Plotinus 4.4 [28] 5 (11-31)

So according to this account (*ek tou logou*) memory seems to have its beginnings in the heavens, when the [descending] soul has already abandoned the *intelligible* world. So when [the ascending soul] has left the *sensible* world and come to rest in the heavens it would not be surprising if, assuming that it had memory of many of the things in this world as described, it also recognised many of the souls it knew; for they must clothe themselves in bodies of similar configuration. Even if they changed the shapes of their bodies to spheres, would they not recognise each other by their characters and the particular nature of their behaviour? This is not

absurd. Although they may have put aside their accidental properties, there is nothing to prevent their characters from persisting. Also if they were able to converse (*dialegesthai*) they would recognise each other.

Q: But what is the situation when they descend from the intelligible world?

A: The answer is that they arouse their memory of the same [earthly] things, but less powerfully than those other souls; they have other things to call to mind, and the passage of time causes them to forget much completely.

Q: But if they turn to the sensible world and here fall into the process of becoming, what will be the quality of their memories?

A: Well, they do not need to fall to the uttermost depths. For even if their movement has proceeded quite far, it is possible for it to halt; and nothing prevents them, before they reach the furthermost regions of becoming, from beginning to shed their garments again. BF

(3) Plotinus 4.4 [28] 3 (1-6)

When the soul leaves the upper world, unable to tolerate this unity, it falls in love with itself, and seeking a new identity it leans forward, so to speak; it is at this point that it apparently begins to remember. One part of its memory, which is of the upper world, still prevents it from falling; its memories of the lower world carry it downwards, while its memories of the heaven keep it there. In general it is and becomes what it remembers. BF

(4) Plotinus 4.4 [28] 2 (1-3)

Q: How will [the person in the intelligible world] have memory of himself?

A: Well, he will not have any memory of himself, either that it is he (for example Socrates) that is contemplating, or that he is soul or Intellect. BF

(5) Proclus *in Remp.* 2.165,22-6

If then they know one another, it is presumably no longer amazing that they recognise one another, since in their imaginations (*phantasiai*) they have stored up a stable image of one another and on each new sighting they stir up the memory of the soul which they are seeing. RW

(6) Plutarch of Chaeroneia *On the Face Appearing on the Orb of the Moon, Moralia* 944E-945B

The nature of the soul stays on the moon retaining certain traces (*ikhnê*) and dreams of life. You should think it was of this that [Homer, *Od.* 11.222] rightly said, 'Soul like a dream has taken wing and flown.' For when this happens to it, it is not rid even of the body at once. It gets rid of this later when it is alone and deserted by intellect. Of all the things Homer says, he

seems to speak most in accordance with god when he says of those in Hades [*Od.* 11.601-2], 'After him, I recognised the strength of Heracles, his shade (*eidôlon*), but he himself (*autos*) [rejoices] with the immortal gods.' For each of us himself (*autos*) is not anger (*thumos*), nor fear, nor appetite (*epithumia*), just as he is not flesh, nor fluid, but is that with which we reason (*dianoeisthai*) and think (*phronein*). The soul is imprinted (*tupousthai*) by the intellect, and imprints the body, enfolding it on all sides and marking it with its form (*eidos*), so that even if the soul comes to be separate from either for a long time, it preserves the likeness and the imprint and is rightly called a shade. For these [souls], as already said, the moon is the element, for they are resolved into the moon, as the bodies of the dead are resolved into the earth. This happens quickly to temperate souls who liked an inactive and philosophical life with leisure. Abandoned by intellect, and no longer having any use for the passions (*pathê*), they wither away. But among souls which like honour and action and physical love and high spirit, some pass their time in a sort of sleep like the soul of Endymion, having as dreams their memories of life. RRKS

(7) Plotinus 4.3 [27] 27 (1-25)

But to which soul [does memory belong?] The one we call the diviner soul, which makes us what we are (*kath' hên hêmeis*), or the other soul that is derived from the whole? Well, it must be stated that both have memories, individual in the one and shared in the other. When the two souls are united, all the memories are united; but when the souls are separated – provided they both survive – each remembers its own concerns longer and those of the other soul for a shorter time. At least the shade (*eidôlon*) of Heracles in Hades – and in my opinion this is the shade that we should consider to be us (*hêmas*) – remembers all that was achieved during his life, since it was first and foremost his life. But the other souls, even when they became composite souls, still had no more to talk about than the events of life on earth (and they themselves knew these) unless perhaps [they could talk about] something pertaining to justice. But it was not stated [by Homer] what Heracles – the one without the shade – said. So what would the other soul, isolated and alone, say? For the soul that tows anything at all [of this world] along with it in its wake could recount anything that the man did or experienced; but as time progresses after his death, other memories from former lives will appear, so that the soul will disregard and reject some of its more recent memories. Becoming purer than body it will recall even things that it does not remember from this life. If it emerges into another body it will recount the events of its past life – the memories that it has just rejected – as well as many from former lives. But with the passage of time it will forget for ever many of the things that happened to it. But when it is alone, what will it remember?

Well, we should first consider to which power of the soul memory belongs. BF

(8) Porphyry *On the Styx ap.* Stobaeum 1, 423,3-6 Wachsmuth

The souls outside [the river Acheron in Hades] have memory of their past lives, but those who cross the river, forget thoughts about human things, once they cross. RRKS

(9) Proclus *in Remp.* 1.119,23-120,15

Those [souls] that have lived a more practical life and are not yet detached from a life of that sort love the instrument [sc. the body] which is appropriate to practical activities and are grieved at being separated from it, like the soul of Patroclus, which 'lost manliness and youth' [*Il.* 22.363]. On coming to Hades, they long for union with the body, as does the soul of Achilles [*Od.* 11.488ff.], because it prefers life here to the separated life, because in the separated life it cannot act, whereas in the life of action it was preeminent. Other souls led a bad life and for that reason think fondly of the oyster-like body and life with it, thinking nothing better than the life in it. The divine poem likens them precisely to bats, because they move towards the dark and to the depths of the universe, which one might call an awesome cave, and because they have the wings of their souls fleshy, gross and earthy. What surprise is it, then, if Achilles, with his practical excellence, should desire life with the body which can serve his actions. For Heracles [by contrast], purified by ritual and enjoying unsullied fruits, gained complete restoration (*apokatastasis*) to the gods: 'But Heracles himself with the immortal gods ....' [*Od.* 11.602]. RRKS

(10) Themistius *in DA* 102,18-24

The question that on the contrary *is* worth raising is, 'Why does the [intellect] that is not affected and does not perish not remember the activities [carried out] together with the [intellect] that does perish?' He [Aristotle] solves it by saying earlier [408b27-9], 'That is why when this too perishes, it [sc. the productive intellect] neither remembers nor loves. For these [activities] did not belong to it, but to the common [intellect], which has perished', and by saying here [430a23-5] , 'But we do not remember because this [sc. the productive intellect] is unaffected, whereas the passive intellect can perish. And without this [sc. the passive intellect], it [sc. the productive intellect] thinks nothing, nor does it remember anything'. RBT

Reading

H.J. Blumenthal, 'Some problems about body and soul in Latin Pagan Neoplatonism', in H.D. Blume and F. Mann, eds, *Platonismus and Christentum: Festschrift für Heinrich Dörrie*, Münster 1983.

Jean Pépin, 'Héraclès et son reflet dans le néoplatonisme', *Le Néoplatonisme*, Colloque du CNRS, Royaumont, Paris 1971, 167-92.

Augustine was influenced by Plotinus. Although in *Confessions* 9.3, he hopes that his dead friend will remember him, he speaks in *Confessions* 9.10 as if the saints, and in 12-13 as if the inhabitants of the heaven of heaven, have no memory or expectation, and hence, on Augustine's theory, no time, because all are rapt in contemplation of God.

Reading

Richard Sorabji, *Time, Creation and the Continuum*, London & Ithaca, NY 1983, 163-8.

13. Emotion

13(a) Emotion dependent on the body and on irrational forces in the soul

See above under **6(a)** for the view that emotions follow from bodily states and for the view that they can only be explained by reference to Plato's irrational forces in the soul.

13(b) The correct classification of emotions

Aspasius, the earliest commentator in the Aristotelian school whose commentary has survived as more than excerpts, asks if the most generic emotions are just pleasure and pain, or the four given by the Stoics (and often listed by Plato), who add fear and appetite, or the six sometimes listed by Plato. Aspasius backs the pleasure-pain pair, ignoring Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, Book 2, of which he shows little knowledge (contrast Olympiodorus in **13(i)** below), where Aristotle defines a number of emotions in terms of different types of *desire*, and does not treat pleasure as a genus, even though pleasure and distress feature as accompaniments.

The pleasure-pain pair are hard to defend for a number of reasons. Some emotions seem to involve both, so do not fall neatly under either as genus. Again, the Stoics would complain that Aspasius leaves out the two emotions (appetite and fear) involving thoughts about *action*. But Aspasius makes a telling point against their view of anger as an appetite involving thoughts about revenge. Angry parents need not think about revenge on their children at all.

Whereas Aristotle's *Rhetoric* is indifferent whether the thoughts involved in emotion constitute appearance (*phantasia*) or belief (*doxa*), the Stoics insist on belief or judgement (*krisis*), which for them is a voluntary giving of assent (*sunkatathesis*) to appearances. The earlier Aristotelian Andronicus had Stoicised, defining emotion as involving belief or judgement, or rather supposition (*hupolêpsis*), which for Aristotle (*DA* 3.3, 427b25), is the genus of belief, the supposition that things are good or bad. Aspasius retorts that when we are amused by a witty speech, we need not suppose that there is anything good at hand; we are merely moved by the pleasant.

There are other references to Stoicism in Aspasius' account. He speaks of the contractions (*sunkhuseis*) and diffusions (*diakhuseis*) felt in the chest in distress and pleasure, which the Stoics took to be contractions and expansions of the physical soul. He also speaks of the attachment (*oikeiôsis*), which the Stoics highlighted in the context of family love and self-love as providing a natural basis for the extension of justice to all humans.

Aspasius refers among Aristotelian predecessors not only to Andronicus, but also to Boethus, but rather confusingly truncates Boethus' definition of emotion. This may have been: a motion of the irrational or emotional (*pathêtikon*) part of the soul, which is also a detected change of quality in the body, and which is above a certain magnitude. Aspasius criticises him for apparently thinking that a detected soul motion, if too small, would not be an effect in the body.

(1) Aspasius *in EN* 42,27-47,2

[42,27] It is worth investigating the following, too, namely how pleasure and distress are said to attend on every emotion. For some have believed that these two emotions are the most generic (*genikôtata*) according to Aristotle – so generic that emotion is divided into two emotions, pleasure and distress, and all the other emotions are subsumed under pleasure and distress. For example anger (*orgê*) and fear are subsumed under distress, while confidence is subsumed under pleasure, and appetite (*epithumia*) is something that shares in both distress and pleasure. For distress is present in one who has an appetite because of (*kata*) a lack, and pleasure because of hope: if a human being were completely without hope of attaining what he has an appetite for, then distress would attend on appetite as its genus.

[43,2] This argument has some plausibility, but it is debatable. For since it is agreed that a certain pleasure and distress are among the species of emotion, as when we rejoice at (*epi*) the fact that we ourselves are faring well or that our dear ones are, pleasure is called such a thing [i.e. an emotion], as is distress at our own misfortunes or those of our dear ones. But by what differentia, then, will we divide the generic pleasure and distress from those just mentioned [i.e. distress and pleasure as species of the genus]? For if there is the same description of every pleasure, namely that pleasure is the unimpeded actualisation of something in accord with nature [Aristotle *EN* 7.12, 1153a12-15], then one cannot say that there are two pleasures, one the genus and one the species, since they have the same name and the same description. There is no specific definition beyond the above definition of particular pleasure, unless a person should claim that the above description is common to all pleasure, and likewise the opposite description is common to [all] distress. The actualisation within the species [of pleasure] of what is in accord with nature, at our own good fortune and that of our dear ones, will itself produce the division, marking off pleasure and distress in the sense of the most generic emotions.

[43,14] There are two species of emotion: pleasure and distress. Of pleasures, some are psychic, some corporeal; and likewise with distress. Psychic pleasures have their actualisation in accord with nature within the soul, whereas corporeal pleasures become pleasures of the soul by way of the body. Of the psychic pleasures, the person will claim that the [particular] pleasure is homonymous with the genus, since it is a kind of diffusion (*diakhusis*) at our good fortune and that of our dear ones, when we ourselves or our dear ones experience good things. It is synonymous with and admits the same description as the genus, for it too is an unimpeded actualisation of something in accord with nature, and it is homonymous in that it has the same name as the genus.

[43,22] Another species of psychic pleasure [beyond the particular pleasure that shares its name with the genus] is confidence, which is a pleasure and diffusion deriving from the expectation that one will not be in a terrible situation, or if it should happen, then the expectation that one will sur-

mount it. All other emotions that are so called in relation to psychic pleasure would be psychic pleasures. Some of these pleasures are just wrong; some, however, when they are moderate belong to virtue, but when they are excessive belong to vice. So in the case of psychic distress.

[43,27] Overall, then, the one [pleasure] is the actualisation of something in accord with nature, but this [distress] has as its species what is called lack, which is distress at our own misfortunes or those of our dear ones, when they are currently experiencing what is bad; anger, which is distress at the thought that we have suffered something contrary to what we deserve, accompanied by a desire to inflict distress in return on the one who distressed us; and fear, which is a species of distress that arises on account of an anticipated evil.

[43,33] This may suffice in regard to the primary division of emotion into pleasure and distress. But since appetite seems to be something mixed out of pleasure and distress, it may seem that this cannot be the most generic pleasure and distress. For every species of emotion, of whichever sort, must be classified under its proper sort, but there is no [genus] that is mixed out of the two. For just as animal is divided into rational *and* the irrational, and all animals are either rational or irrational but none belongs to the rational and the irrational, it is likewise reasonable that the generic emotions should be pleasure or distress [and not a mixture of them].

[44,3] This is why some people try to claim that they [i.e. pleasure and distress] are not genera, and that the primary division of emotions is not into these, but rather that what Aristotle says [*EN* 10.4 1174b33] is that they accompany the emotions the way a good complexion accompanies health and a bad complexion accompanies illness. We must consider these points. Appetite does have, as has been said, a certain mixture of pleasure and distress, and so too does wrath (*thumos*): for this too seems to occur along with pleasure and distress. Homer makes this clear when he says [of wrath that it is] 'much sweeter than dripping honey in the breasts of men [*Iliad* 18.109]', and so forth.

[44,10] Consider whether it mightn't be better to take it again from the top concerning what emotion is and what its species might be. For perhaps pleasure and distress rightly seem more generic emotions than the others. The Stoics wrongly using the [idea that emotion is] opposite to right reason, thought that emotion is a vehement impulse (*hormê*) or an irrational impulse. But neither is every emotion vehement nor is every emotion opposite to reason. Rather, some are proper to a good man. Certainly, we find fault with people who have implacable and harsh characters. So too, it is quite impracticable to pluck out the desiderative (*orektikon*) part of the soul, but it is possible to put it in order as being something that has proportion: it can be put in order through the equilibrium of the emotions.

[44,19] That there is a desiderative (*orektikon*) and emotional (*pathêtikon*) part of the soul must be investigated elsewhere [cf. 18,16; 35,17; and references at 35,6 to exoteric works, i.e. Aristotle's now fragmentary dialogues]: we find no definition of emotion in any of the old

Peripatetics. Among later members, Andronicus said that emotion is an irrational motion of the soul produced through (*dia*) a supposition (*hupolêpsis*) of evil or good; he took 'irrational' not as the opposite of right reason, as the Stoics do, but rather as a movement of the irrational part of the soul. Boethus [also Peripatetic] defined emotion as an irrational motion of the soul that has a certain magnitude; he too took 'irrational' as a motion of the irrational part of the soul, but he added magnitude, since there are also some other motions of the irrational part of the soul accompanied by brief attachments (*oikeiôseis*) to people or estrangements (*allotriôseis*) from them. He thought that those movements accompanied by brief [affections of this sort] were not worthy of the name emotions. I do not know how he meant this. For every motion of the emotional part of the soul, if it is noticed, would be an effect in the body, and not only a motion that has magnitude. The words 'change of quality' are added in Boethus' phrase 'like every movement of the body that is by way of change of quality [omit 'not'], if it is noticed as an effect in the body', because these are the things that the transformation of the soul in emotions looks like being.

[44,33] Andronicus said, 'an emotion arises through (*dia*) a supposition (*hupolêpsis*) of good or bad things,' first of all, perhaps, because he did not know that some emotions arise from (*ex*) mere appearance (*phantasia*), apart from assent (*sunkatathesis*) and supposition. Sometimes, in fact, an emotion of the soul arises upon (*kata*) perception itself, when something appears pleasant or distressing. Thus, emotions arise not only after suppositions but also before suppositions. The appetites above all indicate this: for often, just upon seeing it (*idôn*), a person acquires an appetite for something beautiful simply as beautiful, although no supposition [about its being good] has yet occurred. Furthermore, appetites often arise although there has occurred no supposition at all that something good is at hand, as when the irrational part of the soul is moved by (*hupo*) a witty speech. For we do not suppose, then, that something good is present for us, but rather we are moved by what is pleasing. There are times too when being pleased does follow upon a supposition that something is good, and feeling distress follows upon a supposition that something is bad, but obviously the soul is moved because (*hôs*) what is good is pleasing and what is bad distressing. Perhaps then the emotion is a motion of the irrational part of the soul produced by (*hupo*) what is pleasing or distressing. For whether the emotion follows after appearance, or whether it is after a supposition, in either case it arises at (*epi*) something pleasing or distressing, and this indicates that pleasure and distress are the most generic emotions.

[45,16] The Stoics said that the generic emotions are pleasure, distress, fear, and appetite. For they said that emotions arise through a supposition of something being good or bad: when the soul is moved at present goods, there is pleasure, and when at present evils, there is distress. Again, when it is moved at (*epi*) expected (*prosdokeisthai*) goods, appetite occurs, which is a desire for an apparent good; but when evils are expected, they said the emotion is fear.

[45,23] It is worth inquiring why they took fear as a generic emotion, although it is a species of distress. For fear is distress due to an expected evil, and not just evil of any kind: for we do not say that poverty is feared, when it is expected. Rather, fear seems to occur chiefly and in principle when the expectation is of evils that bring with them danger concerning our survival. They omitted the emotion opposite to fear: I mean confidence, which arises through the expectation that there will not be anything bad, or else, if it should occur, then one will surmount it. For it is by such a supposition that confidence is produced: not that the expectation itself is the emotion, but rather the movement that follows it in our reason.

[45,31] Though they posited appetite, they omitted anger. For they say that anger is appetite, but in fact it is not an appetite. Or rather, both fall under the same genus: for both are desires, but appetite is a desire for something that is simply pleasing, while anger is a desire for inflicting distress in return. But perhaps not always for inflicting distress in return: fathers, at all events, when they are angry with their sons, do not wish to inflict distress in return. In general, then, anger is a motion of the soul produced by thinking one has been wronged. And one could say much more about these matters.

[46,6] Plato seems to indicate in many places that the overarching emotions are pleasure and distress, and particularly when he says that 'two streams are let flow [*Laws* 1, 636D]': he is speaking about pleasure and distress, as though in these emotions, being generic (*genika*), all the other emotions were included. There are times [*Tim.* 69D with hope in place of appetite, but far more often Plato gives the Stoic four, *Rep.* 429C, 430A; *Laches* 191D; *Theaet.* 156B; *Phaedo* 83B; *Symp.* 207E] when six emotions are enumerated: pleasure, distress, fear, confidence, appetite, and wrath; it seems to me he enumerated the most familiar ones.

[46,12] Perhaps it is not unreasonable to say that pleasure and distress are the most generic, with pleasure being the unimpeded actualisation of something in accord with nature [Aristotle *EN* 1153a9-15], while distress occurs when there is an impediment to actualising it according to nature, and to subsume the emotions under these two. The species of these are what is called particular pleasure and particular distress, which have the same name as the genera: the one is a diffusion at the presence of pleasing things, while distress is a contraction (*sunkhusis*) at the presence of distressing things. Again, confidence is a kind of pleasure through the expectation that there will be nothing terrible or, if it should occur, that one will surmount it, while fear is distress through an expectation of terrible things.

[46,19] In addition to these, people customarily number among the emotions also love (*philia*) and hate. Here, they take love not in the sense of good will on the part of those who feel it mutually, for this is a kind of disposition (*diathesis*) [as opposed to an emotion], but rather in the sense of a motion that occurs in the soul upon (*kata*) loving (*philein*). Opposed to this is the motion that occurs due to hating. Loving is subsumed (*anagetai*)

under pleasure, for it is a kind of personal attachment (*oikeiôsis*) to something that is loved. On the contrary, in hating there is an estrangement, and distress occurs in (*en*) seeing and hearing the hated thing, or, in general, in encountering the hated thing.

[46,26] Gratitude (*kharis*) and anger are also numbered among the emotions. Of these, gratitude is subsumed under pleasure, since it is a desiderative motion of the soul to requite one who has done you a service. It is necessary that together with desiring such requital there be some pleasure. Anger is a species of distress; more particularly, it is distress through the supposition of thinking (*nomizein*) that one has been wronged. One may find that the other emotions too are subsumed under these [i.e. pleasure and distress], for example indignation (*nemesis*), envy (*phthonos*) and pity under distress, and in addition to these, the emulation (*zêlos*) that corresponds to rivalry (*zêlotupia*). For there is a kind of rivalry that corresponds to emulation and imitation. DK

Reading

Richard Sorabji, 'Aspasius on emotion', in Antonina Alberti and R.W. Sharples, eds, *Aspasius: The Earliest Extant Commentary on Aristotle's Ethics*, De Gruyter, Berlin 1999, 96-106.

13(c) *Apatheia* and *metriopatheia* as distinct stages

The Stoic ideal of freedom from emotion (*apatheia*) was endorsed by Neoplatonists as an ideal for philosophers and by some Christians as an ideal for some people, although some of the leading Latin-writing theologians, Jerome and Augustine opposed it. The accounts of the desert Christian hermits, e.g. of Evagrius, show what the ideal meant in practice. Their lives tested human possibilities to the limit, and provided a practical experiment in trying to shed emotion, which has no parallel in modern Western society.

Reading

Richard Sorabji, *Emotion and Peace of Mind: From Stoic Agitation to Christian Temptation*, Oxford 2000, chs 22-6.

I shall treat *apatheia* as a human ideal, not the *apatheia* of the gods. But for a reinterpretation of divine anger, see Iamblichus *Myst.* 1.13, translated in **18(a)**, and Sallustius and Simplicius cited there.

Plotinus and Porphyry see *metriopatheia*, moderate emotion, and *apatheia*, freedom from emotion in humans, as ideals for successively achieved levels of virtue, on which see **17(a)**. Cf. also **18(a)** and **18(c)** for Iamblichus' insistence against Porphyry that priestly rituals do not depend on emotions, *Myst.* 1.12-13; 1.15, but **18(d)** for acceptance of hope and love (*erôs*).

(1) Plotinus 1.2 [19] 2 (13-18)

So the civic (*politikê*) virtues, which we mentioned earlier, really do put us in order and improve us, setting limits and moderation (*metrein*) to our appetites, in general moderating our passions (*pathê*) and removing our

false opinions; they do this by showing us an altogether better way, by being limited and by being outside the immoderate and unlimited, because of being themselves moderated and limited. BF

(2) Plotinus 1.2 [19] 3 (19-21)

One would not be mistaken if one gave the name 'assimilation to God' to such a disposition [Plotinus is speaking about the level of purified virtue, as explained with the fuller translation under **17(a)** below] of the soul, one in which it understands and is free from emotion (*apathês*) in this way. RRKS

(3) Plotinus 1.2 [19] 6 (25-7)

Courage is freedom from emotion (*apatheia*) by assimilation to the naturally emotionless entity towards which the soul looks; the soul gains this [*apatheia*] by means of virtue so that it should not be subject to the same emotions as its inferior partner. BF & RRKS

(4) Porphyry *Sentences* ch. 32, pp. 25,6-9; 30,5-31,1 Lamberz

Now, the disposition in accordance with civic (*politikê*) virtue reveals itself in a moderation of the emotions (*metriopatheia*); as its goal it has the life a man would live according to nature. The disposition in agreement with the theoretical virtues consists in having no emotions at all; its goal is assimilation to God. ... CW

For the aims (*skopoi*) of the virtues are different, as has been said, and generically distinct. That of the civic virtues is to impose moderation on the emotions in relation to activities concerned with natural interests. That of the purificatory virtues is to separate completely from the emotions that which has just taken on (reading *lambanon*) moderation. JD

13(d) *Apatheia* of soul: what part of us suffers emotion?

Does emotion disturb body, soul, or an aspect of soul? See **7(a)** above for Aristotle's rejection of the idea of soul as self-moving, or moved in any way, and for his idea that the capacities which constitute the soul are not literally affected, but only activated.

Plotinus' views have been traced by John Dillon and others and three positions have been distinguished. First, in an early treatise, Plotinus suggests that the whole soul can reach *apatheia* through purification, so that it *scarcely* suffers emotion, and even for the body, shocks (*plêgai*) will be reduced. The passage is paraphrased by Porphyry *Sentences* ch. 32, 33,3-34,10 Lamberz.

(1) Plotinus 1.2 [19] 5 (1-24)

But we should say how far purification goes. For then it will be clear to

what we are assimilated and to what god we are identical. This amounts primarily to asking how [purification relates to] anger (*thumos*), appetite (*epithumia*) and all the rest – distress and the like, and what degree of separation from the body can be achieved. Separation from the body happens, I imagine, when the soul withdraws into itself to its proper abode, so to speak; it is entirely free from emotion (*apathôs ekhein*) and takes notice of pleasures only when it has to, such as healing and respite from toil to protect itself from interference. It removes distress, and where this is not possible it bears the distress calmly, lessening it by not joining the body in being affected. It removes anger as far as it can, totally if possible; if it cannot, at least it will not join in the anger (*sunorgizesthai*; Porphyry *Sentences* says 'mix in its *proairesis*', 34,2]; the involuntary (*aproaireton*) belongs elsewhere, and its scope and power are limited. Fear it will shut out altogether, except fear for use in admonition, for it will have nothing to fear (although the involuntary has some force in this case too). What about appetite? It is clear that it is not for anything bad; so the soul will not entertain an appetite just to satisfy hunger and thirst. Nor will it have sexual appetite – or if it does, the appetites will be natural and in no way involuntary; or else they will be restricted to the imagination when it is prone to this [Porphyry refers to dreams, 34,10]. In general the soul will be free of all these emotions and will want to purify the irrational part too, so that it is not subject to shocks (*plêttesthai*); or if it is, then that the shocks (*plêgai*) should not be excessive but infrequent and immediately dissolved by its close presence. BF

(2) Plotinus 1.2 [19] 6 (10-11)

... So that, if possible, [the lower soul] should be immune from shock (*aplêkton*) and not do anything displeasing to its master. BF

Secondly, in a slightly later treatise 3.6 [26] 1-5, Plotinus makes a much more thoroughgoing attempt to exempt the soul from being affected by emotion or anything else. It is not affected when there is sense perception, 3.6 [26] 1 (1-4), memory 3.6 [26] 2 (42-6); 3.6 [26] 3 (27-9), or vice 3.6 [26] 2, because in all these cases, the soul is involved in activity (*energeia*), not in being affected. Plotinus exploits Aristotle's idea, *DA* 1.4, 408b1-15 that it is not the soul, but the man, who is moved by emotion, just as it is the not the soul, but the man who weaves or builds, cf. Plotinus 3.6 [26] 3 (7-11), and Aristotle's further idea that the actualisation of the soul's capacities, *DA* 2.5, 417b2-16, is preservative, not destructive, and so should not be described as a case of being affected or undergoing qualitative change, unless in a special sense, cf. Plotinus 3.6 [26] 2 (46-51); 3.6 [26] 4 (40-1). He also concedes to Aristotle that what he [Plotinus] calls the emotional part of the soul can be thought of in Aristotle's way as form (*eidos*), in order to make the point that form acts rather than being acted on, 3.6 [26] 4 (30-8), translated also above in **10**.

Like Porphyry after him (*Sentences* 18), Plotinus compares the soul, or rather its appetitive part, to a *harmonia*, here a tune rather than attunement, which plucks the strings. It is a form (*eidos*) and activity (*energeia*), which itself stays still

(*menein*), and is not affected (*paskhein*), but is rather the cause (*aition*) of emotion. The passage 3.6 [26] 4 (41-52), as well as Porphyry, is translated under **6(a)** above. Like Proclus after him, *in Tim.* 3.335-340, partly translated in **6(a)**, Plotinus insists that the substance (*ousia*) of the soul remains the same, 3.6 [26] 3 (30-4).

In the case of emotion, there are three levels 3.6 [26] 4 (13-26). There is an appearance (*phantasia*), which according to Plotinus we call opinion (*doxa*), which leaves the opining part unmoved (*atrepton*). From this (*apo*) what comes to the part of the soul which is (wrongly) said to fear is an unevaluated appearance (*anepikritos phantasia*) which is like a murky opinion (*amudra hoion doxa*). From these two there come the trembling or pallor of the body and inability to speak. In all this the parts of the soul act as causes; it is the body that is affected.

Plotinus recognises that if this leaves the soul so unaffected, the question arises how there can be room for purifying the soul. But he replies that purifying takes the form of re-directing the soul's attention, 3.6 [26] 5 (15-19).

The discussion fits well with the adjacent treatise, where at 4.3 [27] 32 (1-11), translated in **12(e)** above. Plotinus says that the refined citizen, who has risen after death as far as the heavens, but not yet to the intelligible would, will remember his country and family without emotion (*apathôs*). But he concedes here that what is refined in the emotions passes eventually to the good (*spoudaia*) [part of the] soul, as Schniewind points out.

(3) Plotinus 3.6 [26] 4 (8-41)

Of the emotions (*pathê*) some result from opinions (*doxai*), as when someone feels fear thinking that he is about to die, or is pleased thinking that something good is about to happen to him; the opinion is in one part, the emotion is moved in another. Other emotions, as it were, of themselves take the lead involuntarily (*aproairetôs*) in producing opinion in the part whose nature it is to form opinions. It has been made clear that the opinion (*doxa*) leaves the part whose nature it is to form opinions unaltered. But the fear caused by the opinion, coming down in its turn from the opinion, in a sense imparts a sort of understanding (*sunesis*) to the part of the soul said to feel fear. What then does this fearing cause? Upset and shock, (*ekplêxis*), they say, at the expected evil. It should then be obvious to anyone that the appearance (*phantasia*) is in the soul – both the first one that we call an opinion, and the one derived from it, which is no longer an opinion, but, based in the lower part, is a murky quasi-opinion (*amudra hoion doxa*) and unevaluated appearance (*anepikritos phantasia*), like the activity inherent in so-called Nature, insomuch as it produces (as they say) each thing without appearance. As for what had its origin in these appearances, the upset that occurs in the body, the trembling and the shaking of the frame, the pallor, the inability to speak – all these are already perceptible, for they do not belong to the psychological part of the person. Otherwise we would have to call it corporeal, and if it could itself be affected (*paskein*), they would not reach even the body, since the transmitting agent would no longer be able to transmit, being in the grip of the effects (*pathos*) and removed from its own character. BF

[30] But this emotional (*pathêtikon*) part of the soul is not a body, but a

form of a sort (*eidos ti*). However, the appetitive part is in matter, and so is the part concerned with nutrition, growth and reproduction, which is the root and source of the appetitive and emotional form. But disturbance and in general being affected (*pathos*) cannot be present in a form. The form must stay still and its matter must take on being affected, when it does take it on, while the form causes change by being present. RRKS

[39] For the vegetal faculty does not itself grow when it causes growth, nor itself increase when it causes increase, nor in general does it itself change with the change that it causes; either it is not changed at all, or the manner of its change or activity is different in character. BF

(4) Plotinus 3.6 [26] 3 (27-34)

If we agree that activities (*energeiai*) and lives and desires are not qualitative changes (*alloiôseis*) and memories are not imprints stamped in, or appearances like impressions in wax, we must agree that everywhere in all the so-called cases of being affected and moved, the soul remains the same in substrate (*hupokeimenon*) and substance (*ousia*), and virtue and vice come into being not in the way that black and white or hot and cold come to belong to the body. RRKS

(5) Plotinus 3.6 [26] 5 (1-2; 15-19)

Why then should one seek to make the soul free from emotions (*apathês*) through philosophy if it is free in the first place? ...

Purification would be to leave it alone in isolation, or looking at nothing else, having no alien opinions – whatever the nature of these opinions – and for it not to contemplate the images of the emotions (*pathê*), as has been said, nor to create emotions from them. BF

Thirdly and finally, in late treatises, Plotinus revises: only the undescended soul is exempt from being affected. *Enneads* 1.1 [53] 1-6 is characteristic of Plotinus' aporetic approach. He turns this way and that the question whether it is soul, body, or the compound of both that undergoes various aspects of emotion. The longer quotation does something to bring out his philosophical style.

(6) Plotinus 1.8 [51] 4 (8-12; 25-32)

Which soul is evil?

Plato says [*Phaedrus* 256B2-3]: 'We make slaves of that in which the soul's vice occurs naturally'. This irrational kind in the soul welcomes evil – lack of measure, excess and defect, which lead to licentiousness, cowardice and the other vices of the soul; these are involuntary (*akousia*) affections which produce false opinions, causing the soul to consider what it avoids to be evil, and what it pursues to be good. ...

So the soul which is perfect and directed towards Intellect is eternally

pure; it has spurned matter and all that is indeterminate and immoderate, and neither sees nor comes close to evil. So it remains pure, being entirely defined by Intellect. But the soul that does not remain pure but departs from purity is a sort of shadow of that other soul; to the extent of its shortcoming it is neither perfect nor primary; it is filled with indeterminacy, and sees only darkness; it now contains matter, looking towards what it cannot see – in the way that we are said to 'see' even darkness. BF

(7) Plotinus 2.3 [52] 9 (6-18)

In the *Timaeus* [69C-D] the god who creates produces 'the principle of the soul', while it is the gods who are carried along [through the heavens] that cause 'the terrible and necessary emotions (*pathê*) – anger, appetite, pleasure and pain, as well as the other kind of soul' from which these affections come. These words bind us to the stars, since we get our souls from them, and they put us under the control of Necessity when we enter this world; so we gain our character from the stars too, and our actions that accord with our characters, and our emotions which result from a condition that is subject to emotion (*pathêtikon*).

So what is left of the real 'We'? The answer is that we are the true 'We' to whom nature has given control over our emotions. For God has granted us 'a virtue subject to no master' [Plato *Republic* 10, 617E, see below under **14**] although we are isolated among all these evils because of the body. BF

(8) Plotinus 1.1 [53] 1-6; 7 (1-9)

1. Where do pleasure and distress (*lupai*), fear and confidence, appetite and revulsion and pain (*algein*) belong? Either in the soul on its own, or in the soul using the body, or in some third entity compounded of body and soul – which itself can be spoken of in two senses, either as a mixture (*migma*) or as some new entity derived from the mixture. The same question can be asked of the outcome of these emotions (*pathêmata*) – action and opinion. Therefore we need to consider whether discursive reasoning and opinion are to be found where the emotions (*pathê*) are, or whether this is sometimes the case, sometimes not. We should also enquire how intellection takes place, and where it belongs. In fact we must enquire just what this examining factor is which asks the questions and decides them. First, where does sense perception belong? For this should be our starting point, since emotions are either a type of sensation or do not occur without it.

2. Let us first take the soul. Is the soul one thing, and the soul's essence (*psukhêi einai*) another? For if this is so, then the soul is something composite, and it is not out of order to think that, if reason is so inclined, it is receptive and that the sort of emotions we have mentioned belong to it, and in general states and conditions, whether worse or better. If, on the other hand, soul and its essence are the same, then the soul would be form of a sort (*eidos ti*), not receptive of all those activities which it can pass on

elsewhere; but it will have within itself, innate to itself, the activity which reason reveals. For in this way its immortality will be true immortality, since what is immortal and indestructible must be unaffected (*apathes*), giving of itself in some way to what is outside itself, and itself receiving nothing from anywhere other than what it receives from its priors, from which it cannot be parted, since they are its superiors.

For what could such an entity, unreceptive of anything outside itself, have to fear? So let anything that can be affected do the fearing. Nor is it confident; for is confidence found in those who do not encounter anything frightening? And will there be appetites, which are satisfied by the emptying or filling of the body, when that which is emptied or filled is different [from soul]? And how could the soul be part of a mixture (*mixis*)? [It couldn't, since] what is of the nature of an essence cannot be mixed. And how could anything be introduced into it? [Nothing could], because this would be a rapid route to its ceasing to be what it is. Pain (*algein*) too is far from it. And how could it feel distress (*lupeisthai*)? And at what? For what is simplex in its being, i.e. enduring in its own essence, is self-sufficient. And what gain could give it pleasure, since nothing however good can be imparted to it? For it is eternally what it is. What is more, it will have no sense perceptions, nor has it anything to do with discursive reasoning or opinion. For sense perception is the reception of a form or of an effect in the body, and discursive reasoning and opinion are founded on sensation.

If we are to grant the soul intellection, we must consider how that takes place, as well as pure pleasure – whether it occurs in the soul on its own.

3. But we must posit soul in body, whether prior to it or within it. The whole 'which is made up of body and soul is called the living creature [Plato *Phaedrus* 246C5]'.

Well, the soul in using the body as an instrument is not compelled to receive the effects (*pathêmata*) that come through the body, just as the craftsman does not receive the effects of his tools.

But perhaps it is bound to receive sense perceptions, since it is by means of sense perception that it must make use of this instrument when learning about effects that are external to it; seeing amounts to using the eyes; but our vision can cause us harm, so that it can cause distress, pain and anything else bodily too. So too when the soul seeks to look after its instrument it feels appetites (*epithumiai*).

But how can the emotions reach the soul from the body? For although a body can transmit something of itself to another body, how can it do so to the soul? For this would suggest that one thing is affected when a different thing is. For in so far as the one is the agent and the other the instrument each is a separate thing; at least the person who makes the soul the agent is separating them.

But what is the case before we achieve separation of soul and body by philosophy? They are mixed (*memikhthai*); if so, then either there is a blending (*krasis*), or the soul is 'interwoven' [*Timaeus* 36E2], or it is like a form (*hôs eidos*) not separated (*kekhôrismenon*) [from its matter], or a form

in contact like a helmsman, or partly in contact, partly not; by this I mean that the separate part is the agent and the other part, however admixed, although remaining itself has the status of the instrument. Philosophy must direct the instrument towards the agent, but the agent away from the instrument (insofar as the combination is not altogether necessary) so that it is not always using it.

4. So let us suppose that there is a mixture. If so, the inferior member – the body – is improved, while the soul is debased. The body is improved because it partakes of life, while the soul is debased because it becomes involved in death and irrationality. But how could that which has suffered even the slightest diminution of its life have anything added to it in the way of sense perception? On the contrary, it is the body which, by being alive, partakes in sense perception and the effects (*pathêmata*) resulting from it. It is the body too, then, that has desires (*oregesthai*), since it is the body which will have the enjoyment of their gratification; it will have fears too on this account, since it will one day fail to achieve what is pleasurable for it and will be destroyed.

We should consider the manner of the mixture too, in case it is an impossibility, as would be the case if one were to say that the line is mixed with whiteness – which would be a mixture of alien natures.

But 'interweaving' does not require the threads to be similarly affected; what is interwoven [the weft, cf. *Timaeus* 36E2] can remain unaffected (*apathês*), and the soul, however much it passes through the body, need not suffer what affects (*pathê*) the body – just like light, which can be interwoven more than anything else through the whole. So the soul does not suffer what affects the body by being interwoven.

What then if the soul is in the body as form (*hôs eidos*) in matter?

Well, first, since it is a substance (*ousia*), it will be there as a separable (*khôriston*) form (*eidos*) and will be there all the more as an agent. But if it is present as the shape in the iron is present to the axe, and if it is the composite – the axe, the iron thus shaped – that produces the effect produced albeit in virtue of its shape, then we should even more readily attribute what affects (*pathê*) the combination to the body, albeit as 'natural qualified body with organs potentially possessing life' [Aristotle *DA* 2.1, 412b12]. For as [Aristotle] says [*DA* 1.4, 408b11, see under **7** above], 'it is ridiculous to say that the soul weaves'. So it is equally ridiculous to say that it is the soul that has appetites or is distressed. Rather it is the living creature.

5. The living creature must be either body of a certain kind, or else a composite of body and soul, or else some third thing derived from them both. Whatever the case, we must either preserve the soul's freedom from being affected (*apathês*), so that it becomes responsible for something else being affected, or else admit that it shares in being affected. And if it is affected it must suffer either the same effects or else similar ones – for example the living creature may feel appetite in one way while the appetitive part of the soul may be active or affected in another. So we must

consider body of a certain kind later on. But how could the composite feel distress for example? Could it be the case that when the body is in a particular condition, the effect (*pathos*) reaches the level of sense perception, and the sense perception finally enters the soul? But this explanation still fails to make clear how sense perception occurs.

Perhaps distress starts from an opinion (*doxa*) or judgment (*krisis*) of some evil being present to a man or his family, and as a result a distressing change occurs in the body and the whole living creature. But this explanation fails to make the source of the opinion clear – is it the soul or the composite? [For answers see **13(e)**.] Furthermore the emotion (*pathos*) of distress is not included in the opinion about something – that it is evil. For it is entirely possible for there to be an opinion without any distress supervening, just as you can be of the opinion that you are being insulted without feeling angry; similarly your appetite need not be stirred at the thought of something good. In what way then are these things that affect the combination? Alternatively could it be the case that appetite belongs to the appetitive part (*epithumêtikon*) of the soul, anger (*thumos*) to the irascible part (*thumikon*), and in general all stretching [reading *ektasis*] towards something to the desiring (*orektikon*) part? No, because even by this account the emotions do not belong to the combination, but to the soul on its own. Well, they belong to the body too, since the blood and bile must boil, and the body disposed in a certain way must stir the desire (*orexis*), as in the case of sex.

But it must be admitted that desire for the good does not affect the combination, but like certain other effects belongs to the soul; and so reason does not allow all to belong to the combination. But when a man desires sexual intercourse it will be the man who has the appetite; but in another sense it will be the appetitive part of his soul. How so? Is it that the man initiates the appetite while the appetitive part of the soul follows his orders? No, for how could the man have any appetites at all not initiated by the appetitive part of his soul? Well then, it is the appetitive part that takes the initiative. But how could it unless the body were not previously disposed in a certain way?

6. It might be better to say that in general because of the presence of the powers [of the soul], whatever has them is active in accordance with them, while the powers themselves are unchanged, merely providing the possibilities to whatever has them.

But if this is the case, then it is possible that when the living creature is affected, the cause of its life, which bestows itself on the composite, remains unaffected, and the effects and the activities belong to the creature possessing it.

But if this is the case, then life does not belong in any way to the soul, but to the compound or (to put it another way) the life of the compound does not belong to the soul; it will not be the sensitive power that has sense perception, but whatever possesses it.

But if sense perception is a movement that pervades the body and finally

enters the soul, surely it is the soul which is experiencing the sense perception? The power of sense perception is present to it, and it is by its presence that the soul perceives whatever the compound perceives.

But if the power is not changed, how can the compound have sense perception if the soul and the power of sense perception are not taken into account? BF

7. Let it be the compound that perceives, and the soul does not by its presence give itself in such and such a condition to the compound, or to the other component. But from the body in such and such a condition and from a sort of light, as it were, which it gives of itself, it makes the nature of the living creature, which is a distinct thing, to which sense perception and all the other experiences (*pathê*) of the living creature are ascribed. But how is it *we* who perceive? It is because we are not rid of the living creature of this kind, even if in the whole human essence which consists of many things there are other more worthy things present for us. RRKS

As explained under **6(a)** above, Proclus comments in two works on the passage of Plato's *Timaeus* 43B-44B, in which it is said that in newborn babies, and in humans when first created by the Demiurge, the bodily fluidity caused by growth and sensation suppresses the rational movements of the soul. Galen had cited this in his treatise *That the Capacities of the Soul Follow the Blends of the Body*. Proclus replies to Galen, but in a way that Galen had already anticipated and answered (*QAM* 64,19-65,1; 70,11-13, translated under **6(a)**), that the body cannot help the soul, but only impede it, like a chattering neighbour, and the soul is not really disturbed; it is merely seeing, as it were, its reflection in the troubled waters of the body. The passages, cited above under **6(a)**, are Proclus *in Alc. 1* 226,12-227,2; *in Tim.* 349,21-350,8; 330,9-331,1.

Proclus wants to steer a middle course concerning the independence of soul from body, since he does not want to veer over to Plotinus' view that there is an undescended soul free of emotion. The protests in Proclus *in Alc. 1* 226,12-227,2 and 227,2-7 against the two opposite views, cited separately above under **3(e)** and **6(a)**, come from a continuous passage translated below. Proclus' own view is that the soul moves between perfection and imperfection because its *activities* (unlike it itself) are temporal.

(9) Proclus *in Alc. 1*, 226,8-228,6 Westerink

By thus preserving the intermediary character of the rational soul we for our part give an explanation for both its less and its more perfect states; and these states, we say, are the ways that lead to the perfecting of souls. But those who assign the soul a place that is either superior or inferior to the middle, fail to hit the truth concerning these things. Neither will we accept the arguments that say that the soul, when it arrives at a fluid body, is obstructed by this contact so that at first it is deprived of intelligence, but when the fluidity evaporates because of the innate heat and becomes more commensurate, the soul revives its thinking capacity. For this mode of perfection is bodily and entangled in matter and presupposes that the perfection of the soul follows the blends (*kraseis*) of the body. But the soul

has its own existence prior to the elements and the entire process of generation; the soul is life unmixed with body and nature.

[227,2] Nor, on the other hand, will we admit the arguments that say that the soul is a part of the divine being, a part similar to the whole and always perfect, and that disturbance and the emotions (*pathê*) are concerned only with the living organism. Those who say this make the soul ever perfect, ever wise, never in need of recollection, ever free from emotions (*apathês*) and never corrupted. Yet Timaeus [Plato *Tim.* 41D] does not say that our being is in any way brought about by the first orders (*genê*), as are the souls that are superior to us, but by the second and third orders. And Socrates in the *Phaedrus* [246A-B] asserts that our powers are mixed with the opposite of the good and are filled with strife among each other and that this is the reason why sometimes the better dominate, sometimes the worse. And why say more? The same Socrates observes [Plato *Phaedrus* 248B2-3] that even the charioteer is corrupted: 'Many souls are crippled by the incompetence of the drivers and many break much of their wings.' Yet what is more venerable in us than the power of the charioteer? For it is this that does the recollecting of the divine realities, using for its recollection the secondary and third powers (*dunameis*) as handmaids. This is clearly stated in the *Phaedrus*. Well then, as we said, the due measures of the soul must be observed and the explanations of its perfection should neither be lifted up from the bodily, nor dragged down from divine realities to the level of soul. For we should be interpreters of Plato and not correct the words of the philosopher according to our own suppositions. Since, then, the soul is at one time imperfect and then again made perfect, is in a state of oblivion and again recollects, it is clear that also time contributes to its perfection. For how could the soul change from lack of understanding to understanding and in general from vice to virtue, if it did not accomplish these changes in the course of time? For all change has a temporal existence. JO

Proclus, following Syrianus, takes the further view, partly in line with Plotinus 3.6 [26] 3 (27-34), translated earlier in this section, and with Porphyry *Abstinence* 3.8.6, translated under **6(a)** above, that only the *activities* of the soul are disturbed, not its substance. But he gives the un-Plotinian reason that the soul itself is non-temporal, and he compares a light that is not extinguished, but cannot shine out. I. Hadot points out that in a late treatise Plotinus after all allows that a bad human soul changes to another nature, 1.8 [51] 13 (18-26).

(10) Proclus *in Tim.* 3.335,23-336,2, translated under **6(a)** above

(11) Proclus *in Tim.* 3.338,6-13, translated under **6(a)** above

(12) Proclus *On the Subsistence of Evils* 21,22-8 Boese

This oblivion, however, is different in different souls: in some cases it involves the loss of a certain disposition, while in others it is only the burying of activity. Thus, if you wish, you may call this ceasing of activity 'oblivion', when the disposition remains inside as a light that is unable to

proceed externally because of the surrounding darkness; or you may, if you prefer, call it 'the evil of these souls'. CS, JO

(13) Proclus *in Tim.* 3.340,14-17, translated under **6(a)** above

Damascius disagrees, arguing that the soul does undergo substantial change. Its substance is affected when it projects lives that are liable to emotion, and this is not just the fault of the body. Carlos Steel has argued that in this Damascius follows Iamblichus, whose views are represented in Priscian (and in 'Simplicius' = ?Priscian). Part of Damascius' argument was presented under **3(e)** above, since he threatened that Proclus would have to accept Plotinus' undescended soul, if he postulated a soul exempt from substantial change.

Damascius' argument concerns time, among other things. Human souls cannot, like divine souls, embrace the whole of time at once, so their participation and non-participation in Being, affirmed in Plato's *Parmenides*, must be realised at different times, and this affects the substance of soul which, *pace* Proclus, is temporal. I. Hadot finds Simplicius agreeing with Damascius in his [Simplicius'] *Commentary on Epictetus' Handbook* ch. 27, line 273 Hadot. And Brennan and Brittain in their English translation refer to ch. 1, lines 36-9 and ch. 14, lines 31-2 for the view that the rational soul may be moved by the body.

(14) Damascius *in Parm.* Ruelle vol. 2 252,11-13

We have demonstrated in our Commentary on the *Timaeus* that the entire soul, through and through, is generated and at the same time ungenerated in its substance (*ousia*), and now as well we claim that these conclusions [i.e. the conclusions of the third hypothesis in Plato's *Parmenides*] are to be understood as pertaining to the substance. JO

(15) Damascius *in Parm.* Ruelle vol. 2 252,27-253,11

Perhaps we should now venture to speak out the things we have been longing to give birth to for a long time, namely that there might well be a change touching our substance (*ousia*). For that it is not eternal, that is the clear teaching of Timaeus; that it does not embrace the totality of time at once, as is the case with superior soul, is shown by the decline which reaches down to the ultimate division of psychic substance. Moreover, if it is not active according to this entire substance at once, then what prevents its substance from being somehow affected? For if it remained unaffected (*apathês*), the inclination to the worse would not occur in its activities. No, activities assimilate themselves to substances and are engendered by them, as even before the body the soul itself inclines. And the bodily would not hinder it, if the soul did not tie itself to it. Indeed, how could a body and the life of a body be a barrier and an obstacle to an incorporeal and transcendent kind of being? Those things have no influence on a soul that has no inclination towards them, not any more than generation has an influence on the heavens. But the bond [i.e. what binds soul and body] is sympathy, which the soul has from the very beginning and from its own,

that is to say from its substance which is somehow affected (*paskhein*) and inclines towards the worse. JO

(16) Damascius *in Parm.* Ruelle vol. 2 253,23-6

When the soul descends towards generation it projects some thousands of different lives, and, of course, substantial (*ousiôdeis*) lives precede the active lives, but when the soul ascends again, it dispenses with them, annihilates and destroys them, establishing itself as much as possible in the unified and the undivided. JO

(17) Damascius *in Parm.* Ruelle vol. 2 266,25-8

And it is our substance (*ousia*), apparently, that is the first to cause a fissure in time, inaugurating change over time. And, to be more explicit, by change I mean change according to the substance itself; when this fissure has come about, generation and corruption through change immediately follow. JO

Despite the substantial changes, the soul for Damascius preserves its identity, since the change is more nuanced than an Aristotelian substantial change. One way in which the soul is enabled to preserve its identity is that it changes not its substantial existence, but in its *participation* in substance. This echoes Plato *Phaedo* 93A-94A, and the Platonists reported by Aristotle *Cat.* 8, 10b26-11a5. The idea there is that there are no degrees of soul, or of justice, but there are degrees of *participation* in soulhood or justice. See **Physics 21**.

(18) Damascius *in Parm.* Ruelle vol. 2 272,28-30

Hence it is not difficult to answer the fifth objection: of substance (*ousia*) itself and form (*eidos*) itself nothing is lost, but the transformations and the dispositions of substance necessarily come and go. JO

(19) Damascius *in Parm.* Ruelle vol. 2 271,28-9

It [the soul] preserves the specific form of its existence (*eidos huparxeôs*), but changes the form of its substantial participation (*to* [*eidos*] *tês ousiôdous methexeôs*). CS

Reading

John Dillon, 'Plotinus the first Cartesian?', *Hermathena* 149, Winter 1990, 19-31, repr. in John Dillon, *The Great Tradition*, Aldershot 2000.

E.K. Emilsson, 'Plotinus on the emotions', in J. Sihvola, T. Engberg-Pedersen, eds, *The Emotions in Hellenistic Philosophy*, Dordrecht 1998, 339-63.

Ilsetraut Hadot, *La Problème du Néoplatonisme Alexandrin: Hiéroclès et Simplicius*, Paris 1978, ch. 4 and pp. 171-2.

Ilsetraut Hadot, La doctrine de Simplicius sur l'âme raisonnable humaine dans le commentaire sur le Manuel d'Epictète', in H.J. Blumenthal, A.C. Lloyd, eds,

Soul and the Structure of Being in Late Neoplatonism, Liverpool University Press, 1982, 46-72.
Alexandrine Schniewind, 'The social responsibility of the Plotinian wise man', in Andrew Smith, ed., *Neoplatonism and Society*, Cardiff 2004.
Carlos Steel, *The Changing Self*, Brussels 1978, esp. 69-70; 94-8; 116-17.

13(e) Relation of emotion to opinion (*doxa*)

The Stoic Chrysippus treated emotions as judgments (*kriseis*) that there is benefit or harm at hand and that it is appropriate to react. The judgment, for Chrysippus, is the assent of reason to an appearance (*phantasia*). His fellow-Stoic, Posidonius, denied that judgments of reason alone were sufficient for emotion and appealed to Plato's irrational forces in the soul. That opinion about harm being at hand is not sufficient for distress is reaffirmed by the Middle Platonist Alcinous, *Didaskalikos* ch. 23, 185,32-5, and repeated by Plotinus.

(1) Plotinus 1.1 [53] 5 (17-21), translated in **13(d)** above

In Plotinus' view, opinion is at best a cause of emotion. He actually recognises two ways in which emotion can start: either from an opinion (*doxa*), e.g. that you will die, or from some perceptual appearance (*phantasia*), which then implants an opinion. This relates to his question in 1.1 [53] 5 (15-16) whether the opinion comes from the soul or from the compound of soul and body (translation in **13(d)**).

(2) Plotinus 3.6 [26] 4 (8-13), translated in **13(d)** above

(3) Plotinus 3.6 [26] 4 (43-7)

The emotional part (*to pathêtikon*) of the soul will then be the cause of emotion, whether the movement comes from it as a result of a perceptual appearance (*phantasia*), or without appearance. It must be considered whether when this happens it is opinion (*doxa*) that starts things off from above. RRKS

(4) Plotinus 4.4 [28] 28 (41-4)

A perception occurs and the appearance puts the soul in communion with the disposition of the affected body, so that the soul drives against what is producing the pain (*algêdôn*). But it can be that the soul uses reasoning starting from above, and an injury appears (*phainesthai*), even if not an injury concerning the body. RRKS

Plotinus thinks that from the opinion in a higher part of the soul there comes to be something like a murky opinion in a lower part of the soul, and from these the body is affected.

(5) Plotinus 3.6 [26] 4 (13-26), translated in **13(d)** above

There is a further difference from Chrysippus, because, following Plato, *Sophist*

263E-264D; *Rep.* 603A (see **2(a)** above), Plotinus treats opinion (*doxa*) as a kind of appearance (*phantasia*), instead of distinguishing the two sharply. For Chrysippus, by contrast, opinion is an assent of reason to appearance.

(6) Plotinus 3.6 [26] 4 (18-23), translated in **13(d)** above

Reading

Richard Sorabji, *Emotion and Peace of Mind: From Stoic Agitation to Christian Temptation*, Oxford 2000, passim, esp. chs 7-8.

13(f) Mystical experience, shock and *eupatheia*

Plotinus seems to dissociate mystical experience to some extent from emotion by making use of two different Stoic ideas, the initial shocks (*ekplêxeis*) which are less than emotion, and the *eupatheiai*, or equanimous states, which are superior to emotion. For mystical experience of the highest divinity, the One, he coins the expression 'shock without hurt', which is echoed by Augustine *Confessions* 11.9 in another context, and he describes the love felt in this experience as a *eupatheia*.

(1) Plotinus 1.6 [1] 7 (14-17)

For he who has not yet seen [the vision of the Good] can still yearn for it as for something good; but he who has seen it delights in its beauty, is filled with wonder and joy, and is struck without being hurt (*ekplêttesthai ablabôs*). BF

(2) Plotinus 6.7 [38] 35 (23-6)

The former [thinking the intelligibles] is the sight belonging to Intellect in its right mind, the latter [looking at the One] is Intellect in love, when it loses its mind and becomes 'drunk on nectar'; then it becomes a lover, brought to the simplicity of contentment (*eupatheia*) by satiety (*koros*). BF

At lower levels of experience, Plotinus distinguishes between experience of good, which is gentle, and experience of beauty, which involves an element of pain and shock.

(3) Plotinus 5.5 [32] 12 (14-15; 34-5)

Love of beauty, when it is present, causes pain (*odunai*), because those who have seen it must yearn (*ephiesthai*) for it. ...

But it causes wonder, shock (*ekplêxis*) and pleasure mixed with pain. BF

13(g) Pleasure: activity and *eupatheia* vs. process

Pleasure ought not to be treated like desire as necessarily implying a lack. But Plato does so treat it when he defines pleasure, or records its definition, as a process of restoring the natural condition, *Philebus* 31B-32A, 53C, and similar definitions

are given by Plotinus 4.4 [28] 19 (1-5) and Proclus *in Tim.* 3.287,17-20. Aristotle replies that pleasure is not a process moving towards completion, *EN* 1152b13ff.; 1174a19-b9. It is rather an activity already complete, the unimpeded activity of the natural state, 1153a9-15, or an activity which supervenes on some distinct activity and perfects it, 1174b14-1175b1; 1175b32-5.

On the Platonic account, it is hard to see how the intellect's activity of contemplating what it already knows can give pleasure, since it involves no lack. Yet (see **3(b)** above) Plato does think that pleasure and desire are involved. Plato does not address this problem (although he does suggest in *Philebus* 21D-22C, 32E-33B that the gods do not gain pleasure from intellection: see **3(b)**). Gerd van Riel has shown that Plotinus and Proclus tend to describe intellection in terms other than pleasure, Proclus (e.g. *in Remp.* 1.131,14-16; 2.303,1-4) using the Stoic terms for equanimous states, *eupatheia*, *euphrosunê*, which, however, had already been relevantly used by Plato *Rep.* 10, 615A3; *Phaedr.* 247D4; *Tim.* 80B5-8. Damascius switches to the Aristotelian definitions of pleasure (see below *in Phileb.* 87,1-4; 190). This makes it all the easier to describe the activity of intellect as being a pleasure as well as a *eupatheia*, involving only shocks, or (*in Phileb.* 145; 190) not even shocks.

(1) Damascius *in Phileb.* 13

How does he [Plato] conceive of the relation between intellect and pleasure? In the first place, it is rather desire (*orexis*) that is opposed to cognition (*gnôsis*), and desire and pleasure are not identical; furthermore, there is a kind of pleasure in cognition as well.

In reply to the latter point one has to remark that there is pleasure in cognition insofar as cognition partakes in desire. For the pleasant disposition that is attained when cognition grasps its object, is due to its participation in desire. In reply to the former point one has to remark that the faculty of inquiring is analogous to the faculty of desiring. For inquiry, too, is a kind of cognitive desire: it is a way to an end, just as desire tends towards something. Analogous to cognition, which is the attainment of truth, is the attainment of the object of desire; one could call this metaphorically 'contentment' (*eupatheia*), for want of an adequate term. He [Plato] uses the more current term, 'pleasure', not, however, in the sense of inferior (*hepomenê*) pleasure, but of that which occurs in the attainment, and which is prior to pleasure in the true sense of the word. For it would in any case be absurd to put the inferior at the same level as the superior. GvR

(2) Damascius *in Phileb.* 87,1-4

The isolation of intellect is more forced and impossible [i.e. than the isolation of pleasure, considered in the previous passages]. For great is the love (*erôs*) of truth and the contentment (*eupatheia*) in the attainment. In general, pleasure always accompanies an unimpeded natural activity (*anempodistos energeia kata phusin* [Aristotle, *EN* 1153a14-15; b9-12]), and thus also the activity of intellect. GvR

(3) Damascius *in Phileb.* 136

The form comes to be present in its entirety at the same moment (almost all philosophers hold this view). The movement towards the form is the advance (*prokopê*) of the receptivity (*epitêdeiotês*) of matter; this is the movement that we have termed 'affectivity' (*peponthêsis*). It is different from pleasure, being comparable with the reaching out (*ektasis*) of that which desires, and which is followed by pleasure. Consequently, then, the aforementioned affectivity must be understood to be of this kind, and pleasure cannot be put in opposition with intellect. And perhaps all pleasure – including the invariable (*ametablêtos*) pleasure – is such that it blooms upon the movement towards the natural condition proper to a being. For indeed, in intellect as well, there is a natural condition and a way towards it, but its essence resides in having arrived there. For the stable (*pepêguia*) pleasure is combined with it. Indeed, the natural condition is the essence, and pleasure is combined with its activity. The activity is a movement towards the essence; because it moved away from it, it is eager to return quickly to its essence. GvR

(4) Damascius *in Phileb.* 145

Life according to nature does not admit of those pains (*lupai*) and those pleasures which are meant in the text, i.e. pleasures and pains consisting in the movement from the unnatural condition to the natural state and vice versa. Since this life too performs its activities according to nature, and since activities are accompanied by a pleasure and a pain that are not a shock (*plêktikai*), but rather smooth feelings, it is necessary that the pleasure and the pain in this life are smooth as well. Thus, he himself smoothly intimates these pleasures, saying that there are no pleasures in the natural state, while adding pleasures that are a shock. GvR

(5) Damascius *in Phileb.* 190

Clearly, in the neutral life, i.e. in the life that is devoid of pleasure and pain, we never undergo any shock (*plêktikôs paskhein*). But perhaps there is a pleasant contentment (*eupatheia*), particularly when nature performs its activities without any impediment (*anempodistôs energein*). If, however, we feel a pleasure of this kind, it will have to be in a perception that implies no shock (*aplêktikôs*) either. Thus, if you take movements that do not provide any perception, you will have an understanding of the life that is presently called strictly neutral. For indeed, Epicurus speaks of natural pleasure, calling it 'katastematic [i.e. steady like Aristotle's, not a process like Plato's]'. But also virtue, which is filled with the most perfect pleasure, still brings us to the middle, cutting away what is excessive and deficient. GvR

Reading

Gerd van Riel, *Pleasure and the Good Life: Plato, Aristotle, and the Neoplatonists*, Philosophia Antiqua, Leiden 2000.

13(h) Iamblichus vs. Porphyry on the value of emotional arousal

Porphyry wants the philosopher to avoid at all costs temptations to lust, including obscene language. He is embarrassed by Plato's view (*Laws* 647D) that it is good to have some experience of temptations, and refers only briefly to the dangers of inexperience (1.35), after dwelling on the dangers of experience. Iamblichus replies to Porphyry that phallic festivals with obscene language have a good effect, at least for ordinary people, either through aversion therapy, or because a moderate exercise of erotic feeling moderates the feeling by Aristotelian catharsis.

(1) Porphyry *Abstinence* 1.32.1-2

Detachment (*apostasis*) can come about by force, or it can come about by persuasion and in accordance with reason, by a withering and (so to speak) oblivion and death of these causes. The best kind of detachment is the one which has no contact with that from which it has been torn away; in sensible things too, something which has been torn away by force retains a part or a trace of the tearing away. [2] [The best detachment] comes from consistently not doing. And this absence of doing is provided by abstinence (*apokhê*) – accompanied by constant thought about the intelligibles – from those perceptions (*aisthêmata*) which awaken emotions, and that includes the perceptions arising from food. GC

(2) Porphyry *Abstinence* 1.34.2

The emotional movements which come through hearing, from some kinds of noises and sounds, or from obscenity (*aiskhrorrêmosunê*) and abuse, make many people behave as if stung by a gadfly, completely stripped of their reasoning power, whereas others become effeminate and writhe about in all kinds of attitudes. GC

(3) Porphyry *Abstinence* 1.35.1-2

For that reason it is a great struggle to be purified (*kathareusai*) of [the emotions], and a great effort to rid ourselves (*apallagênai*) from practising them, when by night and day, the inevitable involvement with perception is present to us. [2] So, as much as we can, we should detach ourselves from those places in which even an unwilling person can fall in with the crowd. And we should be wary of the battle which is fought from experience (*peira*) – even, let us say, of a victory – and of the lack of training which comes from inexperience (*apeiria*). GC

(4) Plato *Laws* 647C-D

Athenian: If one only becomes perfectly courageous by fighting against and conquering the cowardice within oneself, whilst one who remains inexperienced (*apeiros*) and untrained in such contests would not even be halfway to virtue, then will one be perfectly self-controlled without having fought against and conquered, by word, deed and skill, in both work and play, many pleasures and appetites which tempt one to shamelessness and wrong-doing, remaining instead unaffected (*apathês*) by any such experiences? RW

(5) Iamblichus *Myst.* 1.11, 37,3-6; 38,13-40,12

So then, you [Porphyry] ask, 'How comes it that many theurgical procedures are directed towards [the gods], as if they were subject to emotions?' Well, my reply to that is that the question is asked out of an inexperience (*apeiros*) of sacred mystagogy. ...

To turn to your questions in more detail, however, we declare that 'the erection of phallic images' is a symbol of generative power, and we consider that this is directed towards the fecundating of the world; this is the reason, indeed, why most of these images are consecrated in the spring, since this is just when the world as a whole receives from the gods the power of generating all creation. And as for the 'obscene utterances' (*aiskhrorrêmosunai*), my view is that they have the role of expressing the absence of beauty in matter and the previous ugliness of those things that are going to be brought to order, which, since they lack ordering, yearn for it in the same degree as they spurn the unseemliness that was previously their lot. So then, once again, one is prompted to seek after the causes of form and beauty when one learns the nature of obscenity from the utterance of obscenities; one rejects the practice of obscenities, while by means of uttering them one makes clear one's knowledge of them, and thus directs one's striving towards the opposite. JD

[39.14] Again the question admits another rationale too. When the power of human emotions (*pathêmata*) in us is everywhere confined, it becomes stronger. But when it is brought to exercise (*energeia*) briefly and to a moderate (*summetrios*) extent, it rejoices moderately (*metriôs*) and is satisfied. By that means it is purged (*apokathairesthai*) and ceases (*apopauesthai*) by persuasion, and not in response to force. It is by this means that, when we see the emotions (*pathê*) of others in comedy and in tragedy, we still our own emotions, and make them more moderate (*metriôtera*), and purge them (*apokathairein*), and in sacred rites, through the sight and sound of obscenities, we are freed from harm that comes from actual indulgence (*erga*) in them. So things of this sort are embraced for the therapy of our souls and to moderate the evils which come to us through the generative process, to free us from our chains and give us riddance (*apallagê*). RRKS

Reading

Richard Sorabji, *Animal Minds and Human Morals*, London & Ithaca, NY 1993, ch. 13.

13(i) Catharsis

The idea of catharsis, that arousing emotion can lighten it by means at which Aristotle only hints, constitutes Aristotle's answer to Plato's view that poets must be banned from the ideal community, because they arouse undesirable emotions. The passage quoted above from Iamblichus *Myst.* 1.11 is the fullest surviving reference to Aristotle's theory of catharsis since his death six centuries earlier. There are fragmentary references among Epicureans by Philodemus. Among Stoics, Seneca *On Anger* 2.1-4 may implicitly rule out the theory (so Sorabji, *Emotion and Peace of Mind*) by denying that the theatre arouses genuine emotion, but it is less clear if Diogenes of Babylon discussed the theory. The neo-Pythagorean *Tablet of Cebes* does and so does the Middle Platonist Plutarch.

Despite Iamblichus' revival of the theory, Proclus justifies Plato's banning of poets from the ideal community, by denying that the theatre could have the cathartic effect Aristotle claims, since it arouses emotions immoderately.

(1) Proclus *in Remp.* 1.49,13-50,28

The second question was the strangeness of [Plato's] expelling tragedy and comedy [from the ideal society], if these make it possible to satisfy the emotions moderately (*emmetrôs*), and, having satisfied them, to keep them amenable to education, by having brought therapy to the affliction. This question provided both Aristotle and the champions of statements against Plato on behalf of this type of poetry with plenty of grounds for objection. We shall resolve it in some such way as the preceding.

[49,20] Everything that imitates all kinds of characters is totally alien to conducting young people to good character. Because of the imitation it easily infiltrates into the minds of the audience, and because of the variety it becomes harmful to them, since whatever kind of character is imitated, someone who empathises with the imitations must become like that. For good character is a single thing, most similar to God himself, to whom we say unitariness is particularly appropriate. So someone who is to come near to such a being must shun the life that is opposed to singleness and thus must be purged (*kathareuein*) of all variety. If so, people who are young and, because of their youth, easily moulded, must stay as far away as possible from everything that drags them down into this variety. So we shall clearly be very wary of both tragedy and comedy, which imitate characters of all sorts and strike the audience with pleasure, in case their drawing power drags what is easily led to feel sympathy and fills the children's lives with the evils that come from imitation, engendering in their souls, instead of a moderate purgation (*metria aphosiôsis*) in relation to emotions, a wicked and indelible disposition that obliterates what is unitary and single and leaves a mark of the opposite kind derived from the love of the diverse things imitated. These kinds of poetry are particularly

directed to that part of the soul which is most exposed to emotions. One kind incites (*erethizein*) the love of pleasure and leads to inappropriate laughter; the other exercises the love of woe and drags that part of the soul down to ignoble lamentations. Each nourishes our emotional part (*to pathêtikon*), and all the more, the more fully it performs its function.

[50,17] We too shall say, then, that the statesman must devise certain emetics (*aperaseis*) for these emotions, but not in such a way as to intensify our empathy towards them, but, on the contrary, so as to bridle and restrain their movements harmoniously. We shall say that those kinds of poetry possess not only variety, but also immoderation (*to ametron*) in the invocation of these emotions and so are far from being useful for purgation (*aphosiôsis*). For purgations depend not on excesses, but on restricted activity which bears little resemblance to that which is being purged. RRKS

Simplicius explains the existence of evils *inter alia* by saying that people are allowed by God to indulge in pleasures until they reach satiety (*koros*) and vomit. This is a kind of catharsis which heals them. Here catharsis and aversion therapy, which Iamblichus *Myst.* 1.11 (translated above in **13(h)**) treated as alternatives, are combined.

(2) Simplicius *Commentary on Epictetus* ch. 35, 341, lines 455-9 Hadot

And that is why teachers also do well not to oppose the desires (*orexeis*) of children all the way, but often to give in (*endidonai*) and sometimes to abet them, since that kind of soul cannot entirely vomit out (*exemesai*) those emotions, if it does not ever exercise (*energein kata*) them and get sated (*koresthêi*) by the exercise. RRKS

(3) Simplicius *Commentary on Epictetus* ch. 38, 386, lines 611-15 Hadot

Thus health and power harm wicked people still more and are bestowed in some cases by way of correction and in others by way of retribution, in order that they may be sated (*koresthentes*) and worn (*epitribê*) by the emotions and may at last vomit the passion out (*exemesai*) becoming thereupon ready for correction and catharsis (*katharsis*). RRKS

Olympiodorus' classification of kinds of catharsis associates the kind which secures relief by indulging a little in the manner of medical practice, not with Aristotle, but with Pythagoras. Pythagoras' cathartic use of music had been described by Iamblichus. Aristotle is now associated instead, on the basis of his remarks on anger and pleasure, pity and fear, in *Rhetoric* 2.3, 1380b2; 2.8, 1386a23, instead of his *Poetics*, with the Stoics and with a kind of catharsis that brings opposites into confrontation.

(4) Olympiodorus *in Alc. 1*, 6,6-14; 7,4-8 Westerink

Socrates' admonition is like painless purges (*katharsia*) and drugs steeped

in honey, because he does not correct souls through opposites in the way Hippocrates bids one correct bodies, saying that opposites cure opposites. Nor like Aristotle does he encourage us to stop anger (*thumos*) through appetite and appetite through anger, that is, by means of opposites. Nor does he [proceed] through a taste of the emotions (*pathê*) and the so-called finger tip, like the Pythagoreans who say that no one could cure someone inflamed with emotions without giving in to them (*endidonai*) a little. ...

Socrates, then, does not correct souls by the methods of those mentioned, but rather by means of similarity. If someone is amorous, he says, 'learn what the love of noble things is', if someone is avaricious, say, 'learn what self-sufficiency is', if someone loves pleasure '[learn] what the true tranquility (*rhaistônê* [cf. Proclus on *Alcibiades 1* 104E at *in Alc. 1*, 138,4, on not being content with a lower kind of love]) is which the poet ascribes even to the gods, when he says "gods who live at ease [Homer *Iliad* 6.138; *Odyssey* 4.805]".' RRKS

(5) Olympiodorus *in Alc. 1*, 54,15-55-5; 55,8-12 Westerink

Recognise that, as was said at the outset, there are three kinds of catharsis (*katharsis*), Pythagorean, Socratic and Peripatetic or Stoic. The Stoic cures opposites through opposites, leading appetite against anger, and so weakening the anger, or leading anger against appetite and so strengthening the appetite and leading it to be bolder, like bent rods which people bend the opposite way, if they want to straighten them, so that the right tension will reappear as a result of the opposite twist. Thus they practised instilling harmony by this method in the case of the soul also.

The Pythagorean kind bids us give in (*endidonai*) a little to the *pathê* and taste them with a finger tip, as it were. The doctors call this 'diminution by means of a small quantity'. For they say that people inflamed with an affliction (*pathos*) will not get clear of it until they exercise it (*energein kata*). ...

But Socrates' kind of catharsis leads people from similars to similars, and if someone is avaricious says, 'learn what true self-sufficiency is', if a lover of pleasure, 'what divine tranquillity is', and just all that was said before. This method is better than the others. RRKS

(6) Olympiodorus *in Alc. 1*, 145,12-146,11 Westerink

There are five kinds of catharsis (*katharsis*), all five taught us by Plato in the present dialogue [*First Alcibiades*]. For you can be purged (*katharthênai*) by escaping to sacred precincts, or to teachers [*Alc. 1*, 110E2], or by busying yourself with books. He taught us this kind when he said [*Alc. 1*, 124A], 'believe me, my good man, and the Delphic inscription "know thyself".'

The second is through criticism, which he taught us when he resorted to attack, exposing the man's judgment based on double ignorance, and

unmasking his life and (showing) what kinds of thing result from double ignorance. The third kind is Pythagorean, which is also fallible. It gives you a taste of emotions (*pathê*) just with the finger tip. Doctors use this kind, when they employ the 'worse in small quantity'. Plato taught us this here by saying, [cf. *Alc. 1,* 123D-124B, also 104A-D with 118B-D] 'you have something suitable for governing the city, something that naturally commands, if you were willing to embellish it by education [cf. *Alc. 1,* 118B8; 119B].' For by these words [Socrates] heightened [Alcibiades'] ambition. The fourth kind is the Aristotelian, which cures evil with evil and brings things into proportion by the conflict of opposites. And Plato taught this kind here [*Alc. 1* as a whole] by sometimes casting him down with rebukes and sometimes raising him to the heights with encouragement, and thus making him generate the definition of political science. The fifth kind, which is also the most efficacious, is the Socratic which uses progress by means of similarity, and Plato uses this here when he says, [an interpretation of 104E, as in 7,4-8 above] 'Do you love power? Learn what real power is, which cannot be taken away by a tyrant. Do you love pleasure? Learn what real tranquillity is, which is found even among the gods.' RRKS

The *Tractatus Coislinianus* is a work possibly of the sixth century AD, which Richard Janko has identified as including a summary of Aristotle's lost treatment of comedy, including its cathartic effect. Janko supplies a translation and a reconstruction of this lost part of Aristotle's *Poetics*.

Reading

Jacob Bernays, *Zwei Abhandlungen über die aristotelische Theorie des Drama*, Breslau 1857, Berlin 1880.
Richard Janko, *Aristotle: Poetics*, Indianapolis 1987.
Alexandre Nicev, *L'Énigme de la catharsis tragique dans Aristote*, Sofia 1970.
Richard Sorabji, *Emotion and Peace of Mind: From Stoic Agitation to Christian Temptation*, Oxford 2000, chs 5, 18, 19.
Richard Sorabji, *Animal Minds and Human Morals*, London & Ithaca, NY 1993, ch. 13.

13(j) The emotional effect of music

The Pythagorean use of music to calm disruptive behaviour, already reported by Posidonius, Quintilian and Augustine, who takes it from a lost work of Cicero, is further elaborated by the late Neoplatonists. Besides those quoted here, see also Ammonius *in Isag.* 13,25. For Posidonius see **6(a)**(27) above; for his reliance on Plato *Rep.* 3, 398C-403C, see **6(a)**(26); for Plato *Laws* **6(a)**(8).

(1) Elias *Prolegomena* 31,8-25

Some raise the objection that if all the mathematical sciences require an understanding of the muses (i.e. the liberal arts), why is only one called 'music'? To that we reply that the function of music alone is to heal the afflictions of the soul and body. For this reason, philosophy is the 'greatest

music', because it is healer of the afflictions of the soul, from which it is also called medicine of souls. To show that music heals afflictions of souls, they say that once Pythagoras, having observed a young man pursue a girl playing a flute, ordered her to stop playing her pipes, and when the music ceased, he (thereby) brought an end to the young man's erotic passion. But even up to today we experience musical enchantment. For when we hear theatrical music we become relaxed and tranquil, and when we hear battle music we become the opposite. And livestock are persuaded by just such a shepherd's pipe to go out into the pasture and again to return to the folds. And the trumpet in battle excites and rouses the horses. But they even say that Agamemnon, intending to attack Troy, did not set out for battle without first leaving behind some minstrel to be a guard over the self-control of his own wife, Clytemnestra. As a result, when Aegisthus wished to sleep with her, he did not coax her into willingness until he had made away with the minstrel to a certain island said to be deserted. And then he brought her to his own house, as the Homeric poems recount. And Synesius, the philosopher who became bishop of Cyrene, when some barbarians attacked Cyrene, defeated them with some songs, and fleeing, they smote one another even though no one was pursuing them. MR

(2) Boethius *On Music* Prooemium 184,10-185,17

Who does not know that Pythagoras restored a drunken young man from Tauromenium who was stirred up by the sound of the sub-Phrygian mode to a calmer state of self-possession by means of a spondaic accompaniment? When his mistress was shut in the house of a rival and he in his frenzy wanted to burn the house down, Pythagoras was making his usual nightly observation of the courses of the stars. Pythagoras realised that he was unwilling to desist from the crime at the repeated advice of his friends, since he was stirred up by the sound of the Phrygian mode. So he instructed that the mode should be changed, and in that way he moderated the mind of the frenzied young man, turning him into a state of complete mental pacification. No doubt that is what Marcus Tullius [Cicero] in the book he composed *On Counselling* records in a different way as follows: 'But if drawn by a certain analogy I may compare the smallest with the greatest, it is as when some drunken young men, who were also as it happened excited by the playing of the flute, were breaking down the door of a chaste woman. Pythagoras is said to have instructed the flautist to play a spondaic metre, and when she had done so, their frenzied wantonness subsided at the slowness of the mode and the gravity of the player.' RRKS

(3) Boethius *On Music* Prooemium 185,23-186,1

Of Empedocles too it is said that when someone threatened his guest with a sword, furious that the guest had sought to condemn his father with an accusation, Empedocles changed the mode of what was to be played and in

that way moderated the young man's anger. So much indeed was the power of the musical art known in the practice of ancient philosophy that the Pythagoreans used certain songs, when dissolving their daily cares in sleep, so that a quiet and gentle slumber might steal upon them. RRKS

Plotinus, like Posidonius *ap.* Galenum *PHP* 5.6.21-2 (translated under **6(a)** above), thinks that wordless music appeals to the irrational parts of the soul.

(4) Plotinus 4.4 [28] 40 (23-5)

It is the irrational soul, not any act of choice or reason, that is charmed by music. BF

Reading

Richard Sorabji, *Emotion and Peace of Mind: From Stoic Agitation to Christian Temptation*, Oxford 2000, chs 5 and 8.

Iamblichus seeks to reconstruct Pythagoras' therapeutic use of music in his *On the Pythagorean Life* ch. 15, 64,1-67,1; ch. 16, 68,1-4; 70,9-18; ch. 25, 110,1-111,1.

(5) Iamblichus *On the Pythagorean Life* 15, 64,1-65,1

He [Pythagoras] thought that the training of people begins with the senses, when we see beautiful shapes and forms and hear beautiful rhythms and melodies. So the first stage of his system of education was music: songs and rhythms from which came healing of human temperaments and passions. The original harmony of the soul's powers was restored, and Pythagoras devised remission, and complete recovery, from diseases affecting both body and soul. It is especially remarkable that he orchestrated for his pupils what they call 'arrangements' and 'treatments'. He made, with supernatural skill, blends of diatonic and chromatic and enharmonic melodies, which easily transformed into their opposites the maladies of the soul which had lately without reason arisen, or were beginning to grow, in his students: grief, anger, pity; misplaced envy, fear; all kinds of desires, appetite, wanting; empty conceit, depression, violence. All these he restored to virtue, using the appropriate melodies like mixtures of curative drugs. GC

Reading

Elizabeth Matelli, 'Music therapy in Theophrastus', in preparation.

Martin West, 'Music therapy in antiquity', in Peregrine Horden, ed., *Music as Medicine*, Aldershot 2000, 51-68.

14. Theory of Action

14(a) Up to us and responsibility

Alexander's Stoic opponents postulate the invariability of causal outcomes. It is impossible for a different outcome to occur in the same circumstances or there would be motion without a cause.

(1) Alexander *On Fate* 15, 185,7-11

To rely on the argument that 'if in the same circumstances someone acts now in this way and now in another, motion without a cause is introduced', and for this reason to say that no one can do the opposite of what he will do – may this too not be an oversight like those already mentioned? RWS

(2) Alexander *On Fate* 10, 176,21-2

For the causes of the coming to be of the opposites of these things in accordance with fate are also the causes of these things' *not* coming to be, if, as they say, it is impossible for opposites to come to be in the same circumstances. RWS

(3) Alexander *On Fate* 22, 192,22-5

There are, then, several sorts of cause, and they say that it is equally true of all of them that it is impossible that, when all the circumstances surrounding both the cause and that for which it is a cause are the same, things should sometimes *not* turn out in a particular way and sometimes should. For if this happens there will be some motion without a cause. RWS

(4) Alexander(?) *Mantissa* 174,3-12

To say that, when all the external circumstances are similar, either (1) someone will choose, or even do, the same things *or* (2) something will be without a cause, and that of these (2), that something should come to be without a cause, is impossible, while (1), that [someone] chooses the same things when the circumstances are the same, shows that the external causes have control over the things that we do – this is not sound. For neither is it necessary for a person always to choose the same things when all the circumstances are the same, nor is the action without a cause, if it does not come about in the same way. For the deliberation and the choice and the decision and the person are the cause of action of this sort, [and

the person], having in himself the power of deliberating about the circumstances, has also the ability not to make the same choice from the same things. RWS

(5) Nemesius *On the Nature of Man* ch. 35, 105,18-21 Morani

For if, in the presence of identical causes, as they say, there is every necessity that the same things should happen, and it is not possible for them to happen at one time this way, at another differently, because things have been thus ordained from eternity, then it is necessary that also the impulse (*hormê*) of a living thing should utterly and wholly occur in the same way in the presence of the same causes. JOU

How then did the Stoics preserve the idea that things can be up to us (*eph'hêmin*)? The Stoics were 'compatibilists', that is to say, they thought the prior necessity of whatever happens was *compatible* with some things being *up to us*. The evidence is provided by Alexander and Nemesius in passages closely studied by Susanne Bobzien (but see also Ricardo Salles).

As Bobzien points out, Alexander shows in two passages that the Stoics discussed not only what is up to *us*, but also what is up to *animals*, *On Fate* ch. 14, 183,9-10; 184,23-24. She maintains quite plausibly that only the former is connected by the Stoics with responsibility. But if so, the Stoics were making a decision, for different views had been taken in antiquity about whether animals in general or at least tame animals, can be held responsible (see e.g. Aristotle *Eth. Nic.* 1111b6-9, translated below in **14(a)**) and it is indeed plausible that a *trained* animal might sometimes be held responsible for biting: the training itself of retriever dogs may presuppose responsibility (Sorabji, *Animal Minds* ch. 9; Vicki Hearne, *Adam's Task*, London 1987).

(6) Alexander *On Fate* ch. 14, 183,9-10

But they [the Stoics] think that [what comes about through the animal] is up to the animal (*epi tôi zôiôi*) because it cannot come about though (*dia*) anything else than this, nor through this in any other way. RRKS

(7) Alexander *On Fate* ch. 14, 184,23-24

With impulse they [the Stoics] are able to say that what is up to animals (*epi tôis zôiois*) is what comes about in accordance with impulse (*kath' hormên*). RRKS

Following Susanne Bobzien, I take it that what is up to us as humans is different from what is up to living beings in general, although in both cases it is what happens through (*dia*) them, hence in accordance with their nature, and hence in accordance with their desire (*hormê*). The difference is that what is up to human beings is also in accordance with the assent (*sunkatathesis*) of their reason. Other living creatures merely behave (*energêsis*, Alexander *On Fate* 205, 27-30); humans act rationally (*praxis*, ibid.).

(8) Alexander *On Fate* ch. 13, 181,13-182,20

For doing away with men's possession of the power (*exousia*) of choosing and doing opposites, they [the Stoics] say that what is up to us is what comes about through us. For since, they say, the natures of the things that are and come to be are various and different (for those of animate and inanimate things are not the same, nor even, again, are those of all animate things the same; for the differences in species of the things that are show the differences in their natures), and the things that are brought about by each thing come about in accordance with its proper nature – those by a stone in accordance with that of a stone, those by fire in accordance with that of fire and those by a living creature in accordance with that of a living creature – nothing of the things which are brought about by each thing in accordance with its proper nature, they say, can be otherwise, but each of the things brought about by them comes about compulsorily, in accordance not with the necessity that results from force but [with that] resulting from its being impossible for that which has a nature of that sort to be moved at that time in some other way and not in this, when the circumstances are such as could not possibly not have been present to it.

[181,26] For it is not possible for the stone, if it is released from some height, not to be carried downwards, if nothing hinders. Because it has weight in itself, and this is the natural cause of such a motion, whenever the external causes which contribute to the natural movement of the stone are also present, of necessity the stone is moved in the way in which it is its nature to be moved; and certainly it is of necessity that those causes are present to it on account of which it is then moved. Not only can it not fail to be moved when these [causes] are present, but it is moved then of necessity, and such movement is brought about by fate through (*dia*) the stone. And the same account [applies] in the case of the other things, too.

[182,4] And as it is in the case of inanimate things, so it is also, they say, in that of living creatures. For there is a certain movement that is in accordance with nature for living creatures too, and this is movement in accordance with impulse (*hormê*); for every living creature that moves *qua* living creature is moved in a movement according to impulse brought about by fate through (*dia*) the creature. These things being so, and fate bringing about movements and activities in the world, some through earth, if it so happens, some through air, some through fire, some through something else, and some also being brought about through living creatures (and such are the movements in accordance with impulse), they say that those brought about by fate through the living creatures are '*up to*' (*epi*) the living creatures – coming about in a similar way, as far as necessity is concerned, to all the others; because for these too [i.e. the living creatures] the external causes must of necessity be present then, so that of necessity they perform the movement which is from themselves and in accordance with impulse in some such way. But because [the movements of living creatures] come

about through (*dia* + genitive) impulse and assent (*sunkatathesis*), [the others] in some cases on account of (*dia* + accusative) weight, in others on account of heat, in others in accordance with some other cause, [for this reason] they say that this [movement] is *up to* the living creatures, but not that each of the others is *up*, in one case to the stone, in another to the fire. And such, to state it briefly, is their opinion about what is *up to* us. RWS

(9) Nemesius *On the Nature of Man* ch. 35, 105,6-106,13 Morani

Some say that both what is *up to us* (*eph' hêmin*) and what is fated are preserved. For what is fated contributes something to each thing that happens, such as to water its chilling, to each plant its bearing a certain fruit, to stone its downward motion and to fire its upward motion, and in the same way to a living thing its assent (*sunkatathesis*) and impulse (*horman*); so when nothing external and fated obstructs this impulse, then walking is completely *up to us* and we shall walk whatever happens. Those who say this, the Stoics Chrysippus and Philopator [a Stoic] and many other famous men, prove nothing other than that everything happens by fate; for if they say that our impulses are given to us by fate and these are sometimes hindered by fate, sometimes not, it is clear that everything happens by fate, including what is thought to be *up to* us.

[105,17] We shall again use the same arguments against them to show the absurdity of their opinion. For if, in the presence of identical causes, as they say, there is every necessity that the same things should happen, and it is not possible for them to happen at one time this way, at another differently, because things have been thus ordained from eternity, then it is necessary that also the impulse of a living thing should utterly and wholly occur in the same way in the presence of the same causes. But if impulse also follows from necessity where is what is up to us left? For what is up to us must be free (*eleutheron*). JOU

On Alexander's rival view of what is up to us at least four things are needed. First, we have the power (*exousia*) to do or not to do and to choose or not to choose (181,13-14, translated just above in this section; 205,19-20; 180,26). Bobzien ('inadvertent conception') sees *exousia* as a decision-making faculty, first made central by Alexander. Secondly, the desire or impulse (*hormê*) in accordance with which the act is performed must be a rational desire in the sense that it occurs in beings capable of deliberation and not of mere choice, but of Aristotelian deliberate choice (*proairesis*), a policy choice based on deliberation about how to achieve one's ideals (205,15-18). The deliberate choice need not have been exercised, but things are up to us because if we do not exercise it, we could have. Thirdly, Alexander opposes the principle of invariability of causal outcomes in the same circumstances. He does so in the passages quoted above. Hence when he talks of the power to do or not to do and to choose or not to choose, he means that in the same circumstances we may go either way. This is made still clearer by his combination of the point with a denial of prior causes preventing us from choosing the other way, and his appeal to the relevance of self-blame and regret. Fourthly, in *On Fate* ch. 15, 185,7-21 Alexander seems to agree with the Stoics that a cause is needed and an internal cause.

Moreover, at this point and above at (4) in *Mantissa* 174,10, he further suggests that the person is the cause.

(10) Alexander *On Fate* ch. 33, 205,1-22

[Consider the following argument]: 'Those who do not think that the preservation of the activity of living creatures according to impulse (*hormê*) already preserves what is up to us are mistaken; for everything that comes to be according to impulse is up to those who exercise the impulse. For is not what is up to us an activity? And, again, this being agreed, do not some activities seem to be according to impulse and some not? And, again, this being so, [is it not true that] none of those things that are activities indeed, but *not* according to impulse, is up to us? So, if this too is conceded, it follows on the basis of these [assertions] (*epi toutois*) that all that comes to be according to impulse is up to those who act thus; for [what is up to us] is not [to be found] in any of those activities that are of *another* sort [i.e. *not* according to impulse]. Therefore what is up to us, [in the sense of] what can both be brought about by us and not, is preserved in our position; for the things that come to be in this way, too, are [to be found] in those that come to be according to impulse.'

[205,12] How is this not [the argument] of those who are totally ignorant of the matters they are discussing? For [even] if it has been conceded that what is up to us is [to be found] in activities according to impulse, it does not yet follow on account of this argument that all activity that is according to impulse is up to us. For 'what is up to us' is only present in those things that come to be according to impulse that are activities in accordance with *rational* impulse. And rational impulse is that which comes about in [creatures] endowed with deliberation and choice (*bouleutikoi kai proairetikoi*); that is, the [impulse] of human beings, when what comes about is up to them. For the activities according to impulse of other creatures are not like this, because with them it is no longer the case that they possess the power (*exousia*) of also *not* performing the activity that is according to impulse. And for this reason what is up to us is [to be found] in activities according to impulse, but it is not indeed, on account of this, the case that *every* activity that comes about according to impulse involves 'what is up to us'. RWS

(11) Alexander *On Fate* ch. 12, 180,25-31

For we assume that we have this power (*exousia*) in actions, that we can choose the opposite, and not that everything which we choose has causes laid down beforehand, on account of which it is not possible for us not to choose it; this is sufficiently shown also by the regret (*metanoia*) that often occurs in relation to what has been chosen. For it is on the grounds that it was possible for us also not to have chosen and not to have done this that we feel regret and blame ourselves for our neglect of deliberation. RWS

Alexander replies at one point, *On Fate* ch. 15, 185,7-21 that the *person* would be the cause. This is a new application of Aristotle's claim about deliberate choice (*proiaresis*), that such a source (*arkhê*) of action *is* the human being, *EN* 6.2, 1139b4-5.

(12) Alexander *On Fate* ch. 15, 185,7-21

To rely on the argument that 'if in the same circumstances someone acts now in this way and now in another, motion without a cause is introduced', and for this reason to say that no one can do the opposite of what he will do – may this too not be an oversight like those already mentioned? For the things that come to be in accordance with a cause do not always and in every case have the cause of their coming to be outside [themselves]. For it is on account of a power of this sort that something depends on us, [namely] that we [ourselves] are in control of the things that come about in this way, and not some cause from outside. And for this reason the things that come about in this way do not come about without a cause, having their cause from us. For man is the beginning and cause of the actions that come about through him, and this is what being is for a man, [i.e. it is] to have the beginnings of his acting in himself in this way, as for a sphere it is to be carried rolling down a slope. And for this reason each of the other things follows the causes that surround it from outside, but man does not, because for him being is [to be found] in having a beginning and cause for himself, so as not to follow the things that surround him from outside, with no alternative. RWS

Alexander is more rationalist than the rationalist Stoics, and much more rationalist than Aristotle. For Aristotle allows that the actions of irrational animals could be voluntary, a notion which (Sorabji, *Animal Minds and Human Morals*, ch. 9) implies up to them and he does so in a context where voluntariness has been connected with praise and blame.

(13) Aristotle *EN* 3.2, 1111b6-9

Although deliberate choice (*proairesis*) appears to be voluntary (*hekousion*), then, it is not the same thing. The voluntary extends further. For both children and the other animals share in the voluntary, but not in deliberate choice. RRKS

In another text, Alexander protests against the Stoics that assent, desire (*hormê*) and action do not automatically follow each other, and adds the idea that will (*boulêsis*) can stop action by not concurring with other kinds of desire (*hormê*). He goes along with the Stoics, however, to the extent of treating impulse and desire as *assent* to the appearance that something is choiceworthy.

(14) Alexander *DA* 72,13-73,2

Assent (*sunkatathesis*) follows on appearance (*phantasia*), but not on all

appearance, as impulse (*hormê*) follows on assent, but again not on all. Nor does action follow necessarily on impulse. The following have a sequence and occur successively in the animal: perception, appearance, assent, impulse, action. But neither is appearance thought to follow on all perception, if it is granted that not all animals partake of appearance, nor assent to all appearance. For we do not assent to the sun's being a foot wide even though we get this appearance concerning it, nor for that matter to anything else that is non-evident. Nor is impulse thought to follow on all assent, for someone who assents to a thing's being white does not thereby have an impulse towards it, nor is it thought to follow either on the assent of mathematicians. For assent to the diameter being incommensurable with the side is not capable of stirring impulse. But perhaps assents of that kind are not assents to appearances, since the scientific disciplines are not themselves appearances. Still, on assenting to the approaching person's being Socrates, we certainly do not have any impulse for anything at all. For it is assent to things not present as being worthy of choice that is impulse and desire (*orexis*) is the same. There are things at which even though we had an impulse we did not act, because our rational will (*boulêsis*) did not concur. RRKS

Plotinus is more on the Stoic side in his account of up to us (*eph'hêmin*) and because of ourselves (*par'hêmôn*), on which see also 6.8 [39] 7. There is no need, he agrees with the Stoic compatibilists, to avoid determinism. Things are up to us, provided that the causes are not external, but are our own right reason, unimpeded by passion or error. The same applies to the voluntary (*hekousion*): necessity includes the voluntary.

(15) Plotinus 3.1 [3] 9 (1-16)

So everything that happens owing to a combination of choice (*proairesis*) and chance is necessary. What other factor could there be? Given all the causes, everything must occur absolutely according to them. Among external causes is included anything that makes its contribution from the circuit [of the heavens]. So when the soul has been changed by external factors and acts or feels an impulse (*horman*), experiencing a sort of blind rush (*phora*), we should not say that either its action or its disposition is voluntary (*hekousion*); similarly when it is acting on its own (*autê par' hautês*) but is not at its best, but is prey to impulses which are not entirely correct and under its control. But it is only when, in feeling an impulse, it has as its guide its own pure and unaffected (*apathês*) reason that we should claim that this impulse is 'up to us' (*eph'hêmin*) and voluntary. Our own actions are those which do not originate from outside ourselves, but from inside, from a soul that is pure, a primary origin, a lord and master who is not led astray by ignorance or conquered by the power of his appetites, which attack him and forcibly abduct him, and no longer allow any acts to come from us, but only passive responses (*pathêmata*). BF

(16) Plotinus 3.1 [3] 10 (1-15)

Finally, the argument tells us that everything is indicated by the stars and brought into being through causes, which are of two kinds. Some things occur because of the soul, and other through other causes, the ones that encircle the soul. When souls do what they do acting according to right reasoning, they are acting because of themselves (*par' hautôn*); but when they are prevented in other matters from acting on their own, rather than act they are acted upon. Consequently the causes of foolishness are other [than the soul]; it is perhaps correct to say that it is acting according to Fate (*kath' heimarmenên*) where Fate seems to be an external cause; but the noblest actions come from ourselves, since this is our nature when we are alone. Morally good people do act, and the noble actions they perform are up to them (*ep' autois*); but other people are allowed to perform their noble actions in so far as they have some respite to draw breath, not getting such wisdom as they have at any time from an external source; they are merely unhindered. BF

(17) Plotinus 3.2 [47] 10 (1-19)

Q: But if men cannot help being evil and are therefore acting involuntarily (*akontes*), why should we apportion blame when they do harm and when their victims suffer? But if in fact they are compelled to be evil either by the course of the planets or by some first principle that initiates a train of events, then they are acting according to nature. If it is the forming principle itself that makes them like this, then surely their injustice is to be put down to that?

A: Well, they are acting involuntarily in one sense, in that all wrongdoing is involuntary. But this does not deny that it is they themselves who are acting because of themselves (*par' autôn*); but it is because they themselves are acting that they themselves are doing wrong. Otherwise, if it were not they themselves who were acting, it would not be they themselves who were doing wrong. Necessity is not just something external, but something all-pervasive. Nor is the influence of the planets so strong that nothing is 'up to us' (*eph' hêmin*). For if the universe were something external it would be just as its creators wished it to be, and no man however evil could oppose its creators, if they were gods. But in fact men do act in opposition by themselves. From any given starting point a conclusion is eventually reached; various other starting points can be included in the train of events; men too are such starting points (*arkhai*) – at least they are directed towards what is good for them by their own nature, which is an independent starting point. BF

(18) Plotinus 4.8 [6] 5 (1-4)

So there is no conflict between the sowing which results in birth, the

descent [of souls] which results in the completion of the universe, the judgment and the cave, necessity and voluntary action (*to hekousion*) (since necessity encompasses voluntary action) and our presence in the body being evil. BF

Proclus, like Alexander, thinks that what is up to us is connected with not only desire (*impetus* = *hormê*), but also deliberate choice (*electio* = *proairesis*).

(19) Proclus *On Providence* 10.39,18-20 Boese

But I say again that everywhere this pre-exists, i.e. that desire (*impetus*) and deliberate choice (*electio*) characterise what is up to us, and this is the task of the soul, a task that remains in it and cannot be transferred to the universe. RRKS

Instead of accepting, with Plotinus, the compatibility of necessity with human responsibility, some Platonists sought to preserve human responsibility by *restricting* the sphere of Fate and necessity. On this view, our choices were not fated all along, and some add not necessary at all, but their *consequences*, sometimes punitive, follow by necessity, like conclusions from a hypothesis (*ex hupotheseôs*). The only necessity is hypothetical. A comparison is sometimes made with the oracles which were expressed in terms of an 'if', like the oracle to Laius, '*if* you beget a child, he will kill you'. The relevant texts are more fully translated in **Physics 5(j)**. They include pseudo-Plutarch *On Fate* 570A-571E; Alcinous *Didaskalikos* ch. 26; Maximus of Tyre 13.5 (p. 164 Hobein); Nemesius *On the Nature of Man*, chs 37-8, interpreting Plato; Calcidius *in Tim.* 150-4, pp. 186,13-189,12 Waszink; Proclus *in Remp.* 2.357,28-359,6; Hierocles *On Providence*, extracts in Photius *Bibl.* 172b9ff.; 461b23ff.; 463b6ff., translated in **Physics 5(j)**, Bekker. Origen borrows the same ideas in an *ad homines* reply to unnamed Greek determinists, at *Against Celsus* 2.20 (translated in **Physics 5(j)**). See **6(a)**(49) for Philoponus on our bodily blend not excluding our actions being up to us.

(20) Nemesius *On the Nature of Man* ch. 38, 109,17-110,9 Morani, interpreting Plato

For everything in accordance with Fate happens in accordance with Providence too, but not all that is in accordance with Providence is also in accordance with Fate. But the divine law itself which he [Plato] says is Providence together with Fate includes everything in itself, some things in accordance with hypothesis (*kath' hupothesin*), others as a result of hypothesis (*ex hupotheseôs*). For [the divine law] includes the principal causes in accordance with hypothesis as starting points of some sort, and these are up to us (*eph' hêmin*) – assents (*sunkatatheseis*), decisions (*kriseis*) and desires (*hormai*). But what of necessity follows these comes from hypothesis, and the choice (*hairesis*) of things to do, being up to us, is in accordance with hypothesis. But when what is up to us is hypothesised [i.e. given], what is fated follows from this as from a hypothesis. For example, sailing is posited as up to us. That is in accordance with hypothesis. Then with our

sailing hypothesised, there follow the results of this hypothesis, namely being shipwrecked, or not. [109.27] And that is why he [Plato] describes as resulting from hypothesis what accompanies and follows the hypotheses which are up to us, that is the starting points and actions. He implies that what is principal and up to us is in accordance with hypothesis, while what follows is a result of hypothesis, and is not up to us, but of necessity. For he thinks the fated is not fixed (*hôristhai*) from eternity, but supervenes on the principal [decisions] which are up to us. In harmony with this is [Plato's] 'The responsibility belongs to the one who chooses (*helesthai*); God is not responsible' and 'virtue has no master (*adespoton*)' [*Republic* 617E], and the existence of prophecy. His whole discussion converges on deliberate choices (*proaireseis*) and some actions according to deliberate choice being up to us, whereas what follows on them and the outcomes are up to Fate [and] of necessity. RRKS

Reading

Susanne Bobzien, 'Stoic conceptions of freedom and their relation to ethics', in Richard Sorabji, ed., *Aristotle and After*, BICS supp. vol. 68, 1997, 71-89.

Susanne Bobzien, 'The inadvertent conception and late birth of the free will problem', *Phronesis* 43, 1998, 133-75.

Susanne Bobzien, *Determinism and Freedom in Stoic Philosophy*, Oxford 1998.

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Ricardo Salles, *The Stoic Account of the Psychology of Responsible Actions and the Question of Determinism*, PhD Diss, University of London 1997.

Ricardo Salles, 'Determinism and recurrence in early Stoic thought', *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 24, 2003, 253-72.

R.W. Sharples, *Alexander of Aphrodisias On Fate*, London 1983, commentary on passages cited.

R.W. Sharples, 'Alexander of Aphrodisias *De Fato*: some parallels', *Classical Quarterly* 28, 1978, 243-66.

Richard Sorabji, *Animal Minds and Human Morals*, London & Ithaca, NY 1993, chs 4 and 9.

14(b) *Proairesis*

In Aristotle *EN* 3.3 and 6.2, *proairesis* is a policy decision, e.g. for a kind of diet, which is desired because deliberation has shown that it will lead to your goals, in this case health [Sorabji, 'Aristotle on the role of intellect in virtue', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, n.s. 74, 1973-4, 107-29, repr. in A.O. Rorty, *Essays on Aristotle's Ethics*, 1980, 201-19]. But the word was subsequently hijacked by the Stoic Epictetus for a very different concept, something like a concept of will, except that it is more intellectual than that, a disposition of reason to make some choices rather than others. Your *proairesis* is the one thing that other people cannot control, and if you identify yourself with rightly directed *proairesis*, they cannot control you. Epictetus' idea that he is his *proairesis* and that the tyrant can violate only his body, not himself, is not to be assimilated to Aristotle's idea, *EN* 6.2, 1139b5, that *proairesis* is the source of a man's policies, is the man, and that (*EN* 8.13, 1163a22-3), *proairesis* determines character. Often Epictetus thinks of *proairesis* as something good, which makes the right choices. But for his recognition of bad

proairesis which acts against good *proairesis*, and for differences from Aristotle, see Sorabji, forthcoming.

Alexander reverts, as just seen under **14(a)**, to the Aristotelian concept, repeating Aristotle's view that we can deliberately choose whether to do something or not to do it, but making it clear that he means this indeterministically: in the very same circumstances, we can go either way.

The two-way direction of *proairesis* is alluded to still by Iamblichus, though without any discussion of indeterminism and it is now seen as a deficiency. Divine entities, even at the level of soul, do not take on *proairesis* because that consists in liability to bad as well as to good action. It is repeated in *Myst.* 1.12, 41,3-4 that divine will (*boulêsis*) is superior to the life of *proairesis*, translated in **18(a)** below.

(1) Iamblichus *Myst.* 1.10, 36,1-5 Des Places

The soul in itself is unchangeable, as being in its substance (*ousia*) above being passively affected (*paskhein*), and not as involved in deliberate choice (*proairesis*) which swings (*rhepein* [I tentatively take this as transitive]) what is passive (*to empathes*) in either direction, nor taking (*proslabousa*) on adventitious unchangeability through participation in any habit or potency. RRKS

Similarly Proclus, who may be drawing on Iamblichus in a passage quoted above under **3(e)**, assumes at *in Tim.* 3.334,6-7 that it must be human *proairesis* which sins. This again reflects the Aristotelian idea of a two-way direction for *proairesis*.

Plotinus, however, offers a very different picture of *proairesis*. He interprets Plato's account in the myth of Er in *Republic* Book 10 of souls choosing their next lives as alluding to a universal and ubiquitous (*katholou kai pantakhou*) *proairesis* and character (*diathesis*) of the soul. This *proairesis* cannot be diverted by the chances (*tukhai*) of life, such as the kind of body with which we are reincarnated. This overall character looks unlike Aristotle's policy decision.

(2) Plotinus 3.4 [15] 5 (1-19)

But if the soul chooses its guardian spirit (*daimôn*) and the course of its life there in the intelligible world, in what way do we still have control (*kurios*) over anything?

The answer is that what is called the choice (*hairesis*) made there is an enigmatic way of expressing the soul's general and universal policy (*proairesis*) and attitude. But if the soul's policy is in control, and if the ruling factor is that part of the soul which is to hand (*prokheiron*) because of its previous life, then the body is no longer responsible (*aition*) for any evil it has. For if the soul's disposition (*êthos*) pre-exists the body, having got what it has chosen, and cannot according to Plato change its guardian spirit, then it is not on earth that a man becomes good or bad.

Is it the case, then, that he is one or the other in potentiality [there], and becomes it in actuality [here]? And if so, what if the man of good disposition gets an evil body, or a man of evil disposition gets a good body?

The answer is that the influence of a soul of either disposition can to a

greater or lesser degree produce a corresponding body, since external circumstances cannot throw the whole of the soul's policy off course. When Plato says [*Rep.* 10, 617E; 620D-E] that first of all the lots are drawn, that then there is a display of the lives, that then [they choose] their lives, [following] luck, from what is available according to their dispositions, Plato gives control (*to kurion*) rather to the souls which dispose what has been given them according to their characters. BF

Proairesis is also ascribed by Plotinus to the divine stars, and the whole physical universe in 4.4 [28]. In contrast to Iamblichus, he says that the stars do indeed avoid being affected, but not by avoiding *proairesis*. Rather their *proiaireseis* are not affected, i.e. not liable to swing either way. In their movements, they are like dancers in a chorus whose *proairesis* is directed to the dance as a whole, not to the individual movements. The *proairesis* of the living universe is single, and the *proaireseis* of its parts subserve this single one.

(3) Plotinus 4.4 [28] 42 (23-6)

The stars too, in as much as they are parts, suffer affections; but they themselves are unaffected because their choices (*proaireseis*) are not subject to affection (*apatheis*), and their bodies and natures cannot be harmed. BF

(4) Plotinus 4.4 [28] 33 (11-27)

The limbs of the person dancing each figure are bound not to remain in the same position; his body moves and twists in accordance with the dance, with one leg taking the weight and the other relaxing, one feeling the strain and the other resting. The purpose (*proairesis*) of the dancer is directed elsewhere, and his limbs submissively follow in the service of the dance and join in bringing it to its completion. The expert could say how any figure is achieved when this limb is stretched and that one bent, this one pulled in, that one concealed. The dancer does not choose (*proaireisthai*) such movements at random, but because any one limb, if it is to play its part, has its required position as the entire body performs the dance. So it is in this way that we should say that the heavenly bodies act (or give signs). ... BF

(5) Plotinus 4.4 [28] 35 (24-7)

The choice (*proairesis*) of the single living creature is single, but its other powers directed towards itself are many. The various choices in it are all directed to the same end as the single choice of the whole. BF

The passage cited above from Iamblichus *Myst.* 1.10 denies *proairesis* to the divine level of soul, and in general Iamblichus and Proclus differ from Plotinus in preferring to assign to divine beings *boulêsis*, rather than *proairesis*, because they think of *proairesis* as something that can swing either way to sin or to goodness.

This fits with the passage of Philoponus, cited under **12(e)** (*in DA* 5,24-33), which says that *proairesis* belongs to the interwoven rational and irrational soul and makes it function only in the world of coming into being and sometimes on the side of, sometimes against, reason.

Reading

John Phillips, 'Plotinus and Iamblichus on proairesis', *Ancient Philosophy* 15, 1995, 135-53.

John Rist, 'Prohairesis: Proclus, Plotinus et alii', in H. Dörrie, ed., *De Jamblique à Proclus*, Fondation Hardt, Entretiens 21, Vandoeuvres-Geneva 1975.

Richard Sorabji, 'The self as *proairesis* in Epictetus', in Dory Scaltsas, ed., *Epictetus*, Proceedings of a conference held in 2001 in Lanarca, forthcoming.

14(c) The choice of lives

An extremely influential passage was Plato's myth of Er, in Book 10 of his *Republic*, in which souls are described as choosing their next life. Plato here brings together three ideas. One is that of choosing (*hairesthai*). Another is the earliest use of the metaphor of metaphysical freedom: you can choose virtue and virtue has no master (*adespotês*). The third is the idea that because you choose, you have the responsibility (*aitia*) for your next life, God is not responsible (*anaitios*). See **Physics 4(e).**

(1) Plato *Republic* 10, 617E1-5

A daemon will not be allotted to you; you will choose (*haireisthai*) a daemon. Let the first person selected by lot be the first to choose a life which will be with him by necessity. Virtue has no master (*adespoton*); each person will have more or less of her depending on how he honours or dishonours her. Responsibility (*aitia*) lies with the chooser; god is not responsible (*anaitios*). RW

Later Platonists pick up all these terms and add in related ideas. Already the Middle Platonist, Alcinous, *Didaskalikos*, adds the ideas of voluntary (*hekousion*), up to the soul (*ep' autêi*), in chs 26 and 31. But Plotinus expands much further, partly in a treatise which Porphyry entitles 'On the Voluntary (*hekousion*) and the Will (*thelêma*) of the One', 6.8 [39]. In the two extracts below, Plotinus uses the verb *thelein*, to will, and the commoner noun for will, *boulêsis*. He talks of control (*kurios*), up to us (*eph' hêmin*), free (*eleutheros*), as well as using Plato's own terms. In addition, in 3.4 [15] 5 (1-18), already cited under *proairesis*, he repeats several of these terms and adds in *proairesis*, although as noted, he transforms its meaning.

(2) Plotinus 6.8 [39] 5 (30-2)

In what sense then can we say that being good is up to us (*eph'hêmin*), and that our virtue is 'subject to no master (*adespoton*)'?

Well, it is if we will (*boulêthênai*) and choose (*helesthai*). BF

(3) Plotinus 6.8 [39] 6 (1-45)

Why was it, then, that earlier on we referred [what is up to us (*to eph' hêmin*)] to the will (*boulêsis*), when we talked of 'what would happen to the degree that we willed it'? Well, we also said 'what would not happen'. So if what we have now been saying is right, and if our former statement is in agreement with it, we shall say that virtue and intellect are in full control (*kurios*), and it is to them that we should refer what is up to us and freedom (*eleutheron*). For both of these are 'subject to no master' (*adespota*). Intellect is in charge of itself (*eph' hautou*), and virtue wishes to be in charge of itself in its oversight of the soul in order to make it morally good. Up to this point it shows itself to be free and makes the soul free. But when unavoidable action and being acted on are thrust upon it as overseer of the soul, these occur against its will (reading *mê beboulêsthai*); but even so, despite these, it will keep what is up to it by referring back to itself in these circumstances too. For it does not follow the course of events as if it had to save a person in danger, but if it sees fit, it sacrifices him, ordering him to forfeit his life, his property, his children and even his very country; it sets its sights on its own nobility and not on the preservation of what is beneath it. Therefore self-determination (*autexousion*) in our actions and what is up to us should not be referred to performance, viz. the external, but to the internal activity of virtue itself, viz. intellect and contemplation. We should call this virtue a sort of intellection and not reckon in with it the passive effects which it controls or moderates by reason, since these, as Plato says [*Rep.* 8, 518D-E], 'seem to verge very closely on the body' being corrected 'by habit and practice'.

[26] So it becomes clearer that it is the immaterial which is free, and it is to this that we should refer what is up to us, and this is the will (*boulêsis*) which controls (*kuria*) and is in charge of itself (*eph' heautês*), even if it is forced to issue some orders with regard to what is external to it. Therefore what is up to us amounts to anything that is the outcome or result of our will, when it is directed outwards and in charge of itself. Whatever it wills and effects without hindrance constitutes *par excellence* what is up to us.

[32] Contemplative intellect in this way enjoys things being up to it in a primary manner since its functioning is in no way up to anything else, but is entirely turned in on itself; it is its own functioning; it rests in moral goodness, is lacking in nothing, is complete and lives a life according to will, so to speak. Its will is its thought, and is called will because it subsists intellectively, since what is called will copies the patterns of intellection; will desires (*thelei*) the good and intellection truly consists in the good. So intellect contains what will desires, and on attaining it so becomes intellection. So if we reckon what is up to us according to will for the good, surely that which is already established in what the will desires possesses what is up to it?

[43] Yes; and you should place it even higher unless you wish (*ethelein*) what is up to us to rise just that far. BF

15. Methods for Ascent to God

15(a) The Neoplatonist commentators' curriculum for ascent

The purpose of studying Aristotle, according to the Neoplatonist commentators, is as a preliminary to Plato and to eventual knowledge of God, and knowledge that he is unique, as explained in their introductions to the commentaries on Aristotle's *Categories* (see e.g. L.G. Westerink, 'The Alexandrian commentators and the introductions to their commentaries', revised from 1962 version in Richard Sorabji, ed., *Aristotle Transformed*). Besides the *in Cat.* Commentary of Ammonius 6,9-16, translated below, see those of Philoponus 5,34-6,2; Olympiodorus 9,14-30; Elias 119,26-121,4; Simplicius 6,6-18. The curriculum would start with Aristotle's logic, then his ethics (but see below on the need for a more elementary ethics), physics, mathematical works (although Proclus had read mathematics before turning to Aristotle, according to Marinus *Life of Proclus*, paras 9; 13) and theological metaphysics. Aristotle, according to Marinus, was regarded by Proclus as 'the lesser Mysteries', to be followed by the selected works of Plato. A standard canon of Plato dialogues and their order was established, we hear, by Iamblichus, and there were, according to Proclus *in Alc. I*, 11,15-17 Westerink, two cycles. It is interesting that both the *Anonymous Prolegomena* and Proclus *in Alc. I*, 4,19-21; 5,13-14, say that the Platonic cycles should begin with Plato's *First Alcibiades*, because its subject is knowing oneself. This fits with Plotinus' emphasis on looking for the Intellect and the One within (see **15(b)** below), and gives a certain prominence to Psychology. The rationales (below) for some of the other selections will seem startling to modern readers. But the first cycle finishes with Plato's *Philebus* on the Good, and the second cycle consists of two dialogues that are supposedly about the two highest divinities, the *Timaeus* on the divine intellect, and the *Parmenides* on the One. It is not surprising in this religious context that Simplicius should close two of his commentaries, those on Epictetus and Aristotle's *On the Heavens*, with a prayer.

Increasingly, as the sixth century advanced towards its close, Christian students only wanted training in Aristotelian logic, not in the further reaches of the pagan mysteries, if the contraction to logic commentaries reflects a contraction in the classroom.

(1) Ammonius *in Cat.* 5,31-6,22

In the third place, let us ask where one should begin [studying Aristotle]. The natural sequence would be to begin with the ethical treatise, so that after first disciplining our own character, we might in that way get to the other writings. But he has used demonstrations and syllogisms in that [treatise], too, and we are likely to be ignorant of them, being untutored in this kind of discourse. So, for this reason, we must begin with logic, having first, of course, disciplined our own character without the ethical treatise. After logic we must go on to ethics, and then take up the physical [trea-

tises], and after those the mathematical ones, and finally the theological ones.

[6,9] In the fourth place, in addition to these [questions], one must ask what purpose and what obvious utility the Aristotelian philosophy has for us. We answer that it is to ascend to the common principle (*arkhê*) of all things and to be aware that this is the one goodness itself, incorporeal, indivisible, uncircumscribed, infinite and of infinite power. For [goodness] is not the only thing that is good. Notice that just as what we call white is a body that has received whiteness, whereas [what we call] whiteness is the quality itself, so too a body that has received goodness and participates in it is called good, whereas goodness is a kind of substance and being (*huparxis*).

[6,17] In the fifth place, in addition to these [questions], let us ask what will guide us to the aforementioned principle. And we reply: first, the ethical treatise, and then after that the one on physics, and then the mathematical one, and finally after these we will grasp theology. MC, GMat

(2) Anonymous *Prolegomena* ch. 26, lines 13-44 Westerink

The divine Iamblichus selected out twelve [of Plato's] dialogues and called some of those physical and some theological. And he further reduced these twelve down to two, that is the *Timaeus* and the *Parmenides*, of which the *Timaeus* represents all physical dialogues and the *Parmenides* all *theological*. It is worthwhile to consider the order of these dialogues because all previous commentators thought it worthwhile to discuss them. First, then, it is necessary to treat the *Alcibiades* because from it we learn about ourselves, and it is worthwhile to know about ourselves before we know about those things outside ourselves; for how can we have knowledge of external things if we lack knowledge of ourselves? The last dialogue to be treated [sc. in the first cycle] is the *Philebus*, since in that dialogue he treats the Good, that which is beyond all things. So it is necessary for that which is beyond all things to be last of all.

[23] Those in between should be ordered as follows: as there are five rungs (*bathmoi*: Theiler) of ethical virtues – the natural, the virtues of character, civic, purificatory, and contemplative – first we must read the *Gorgias* as it has to do with civic virtue, and secondly the *Phaedo*, as it is purificatory, because the purificatory life comes after the civic life. Then we come to knowledge of the 'things that are' (reality) which proceeds from contemplative (*thôrêtikê*: Theiler) virtue. These 'things that are' are perceived either in thought or in physical things. Following the dialogues we have already mentioned, it is necessary to read, fourthly, the *Cratylus*, because it teaches us about words, and then the *Theaetetus* because it teaches us about physical things. Then we come, after them, to the [lacuna] <*Sophist* and *Statesman* [Westerink]> which teach us about natural philosophy and then on to the *Phaedrus* and the *Symposium* which are

contemplative and which discuss theological matters. And then it is necessary to come to the perfect dialogues, I mean the *Timaeus* and the *Parmenides*. We have thus spoken of the twelve.

[35] Since some consider it worthwhile to treat the *Laws* and the *Republic*, it is equally worthwhile to speak of the object of these two. There are, then, three types of constitution – that arising from reform, that based on specified conditions ('hypothetical') and that not based on specified conditions ('non-hypothetical'). A constitution arising from reform comes about when our soul having been in an evil condition, we regain our (*previously*) unperverted condition; and a constitution based on specified conditions comes about when citizens turn principles and certain conditions into laws; and a constitution not based upon specified conditions comes about when nothing belongs to the individual but all things are in common, so that what is mine is yours and what is yours mine, and the property of each individual is at the same time both his own and that of another. Plato has dealt with the reformed state in the *Letters*, that based upon specified conditions in the *Laws* and that not based upon specified conditions in the *Republic*. MR

(3) Marinus *Life of Proclus* ch. 13, lines 318-31 Masullo (= ch. 13, pp. 15-16 Saffrey-Segonds-Luna)

In a period of not quite two years, Proclus read with Syrianus all of Aristotle's works on logic, ethics, politics and natural science, as well as that subject which is above all these, theology. When sufficiently inducted through these, as though from some sort of induction ritual or lesser mysteries, he was led by Syrianus to an initiation into the mystagogy of Plato, in its proper order and not – as the saying goes – 'stretching a foot over the threshhold' [i.e. jumping] and enabled by him to see as an initiate the truly divine mysteries found in that man's [i.e. Plato's] works with the eyes of the soul unpolluted and the contemplative faculty of the mind undefiled. And applying himself day and night with unsleeping self-discipline and attention, he wrote a synoptic account of [Syrianus'] teachings, which displayed his astute judgement. He produced so much in such a short time that by the time he reached the age of 28, he had written besides many other works, a really polished set of lectures, brimming with knowledge, on the *Timaeus*. MR

(4) Proclus *in Alc. I*, 5,13-14 Westerink

Let this, then, be the beginning of Philosophy and of Plato's teaching, the knowledge of ourselves. RRKS

(5) Proclus *in Alc. I*, 11,11-17 Westerink

I think it was for this reason that the divine Iamblichus gives [the *First*

Alcibiades] the first position among the ten dialogues in which he thinks the whole of Plato's philosophy is contained, as if in this seed the whole development of those dialogues is preconceived. As to which the ten dialogues are, and how one should order them, and how they are subsumed in the two dialogues that follow them, we have discussed this principally in other works. RRKS

Reading

P. Festugière, 'L'ordre de lecture des dialogues de Platon aux 5e et 6e siècles', *Mus. Helv.* 26, 1969, 281-96.

I. Hadot, 'La division néoplatonicienne des écrits d'Aristote', J. Wiesner, ed., *Aristoteles Werk und Wirkung*, vol. 2, 249-85.

I. Hadot, ed., *Simplicius, Commentaire sur les Catégories*, fasc. 1, Leiden 1990.

P. Hadot, 'Les divisions des parties de la philosophie dans l'antiquité', *Museum Helveticum* 36, 1979, 201-23 [a translation by Victor Caston is in the Library of the Institute of Classical Studies, University of London].

Cf. L.G. Westerink, 'The Alexandrian commentators and the introductions to their commentaries', in Richard Sorabji, ed., *Aristotle Transformed*, London & Ithaca, NY 1990, 325-48, revised from *Anonymous Prolegomena to Platonic Philosophy*, Amsterdam 1962, revised version also in French, in the Budé edition, Paris 1990.

Ethics

There was not total agreement on the order in which different subjects should be studied, as can be illustrated from the cases of ethics and mathematics. In their *Prolegomena*, their commentaries on Porphyry's *Isagoge*, and their introductions to commentaries on Aristotle's *Categories*, the Neoplatonist commentators discuss different views on whether one should start the study of Aristotle with his ethics, physics, or mathematics, instead of his logic. But Aristotle himself says that his lectures on ethics are not suitable for the young, *EN* 1.3, 1095a2-11, and the commentators (e.g. Ammonius *in Cat.* 5,31-6,22 and Simplicius, *in Cat.* 5,23-6,5 below) in any case point out the practical difficulty that they presuppose logic. Yet the commentators think that there is a need for a pre-logical ethics, to instil moderation. Paradoxically, therefore, Simplicius chose to write a commentary on Epictetus' *Handbook* (included in the translation series *Ancient Commentators on Aristotle*), even though that was intended by Epictetus to produce not moderation (*metriopatheia*), but freedom from emotion (*apatheia*). Simplicius' aims are different. He is thinking of students who will need the civic virtues and may not go on to philosophy, although they will need moderation, whether they do so or not. He was looking, as he says *in Cat.* 5,23-6,5 below, for hortatory catechisms, or what he calls 'pre-catechism', without proofs like those of the Pythagoreans. Indeed, three Neoplatonist commentators wrote commentaries on the Pythagorean *Golden Verses*, Iamblichus, Hierocles and Proclus. And in his Epictetus commentary, Simplicius compares Epictetus' *Handbook* to the pithy precepts (*hupothêkai*) of the Pythagoreans.

A curious outcome is that we have no *Neoplatonist* commentary on Aristotle's *Ethics* from the period up to 600 AD, although there is an Arabic report of a commentary by Porphyry, translated into Arabic (3eT in *Porphyrius Fragmenta*, ed. A. Smith). The *Aristotelians* had written commentaries on it, so that we have commentaries by Aspasius and (in the form of excerpts) Adrastus from the second

century, as well as Alexander's *Ethical Problems*. We also have much later commentaries by Eustratius and Michael of Ephesus.

(6) Simplicius *Commentary on Epictetus*, Preface, lines 48-9 Hadot (= 2,15-17 Dübner)

The words [in Epictetus' *Handbook*] are pithy and gnomic (*gnômonikoi*) as befits the type called among the Pythogoreans 'precepts' (*hupothêkai*). TB, CB

(7) Simplicius *in Cat.* 5,23-6,5

If Aristotle's *Ethics* were only hortatory catechisms (*katêkhêseis*) not based on demonstrations, such as the many which were recited among the Pythagoreans, it would be right thereby to train our characters, starting from these. But if Aristotle handed down the *Ethics* too with divisions and demonstrations of the most scientific sort, how shall we be able to accomplish anything more, after coming to them without the demonstrative methods? Perhaps, then, there is every need of an ethical pre-catechism (*prokatêkhêsis*), but not supplied through Aristotle's *Ethics*, but through habituation without texts, and through non-technical exhortations, both written and unwritten, to straighten our character, and after that the logical and demonstrative method. After those, we shall be able to take in scientifically the scientific discussions of character and research into reality. RRKS

Reading

I. Hadot, *Le problème du Néoplatonisme Alexandrin: Hiéroclès et Simplicius*, Paris 1978, 147-65.
I. Hadot, ed., *Simplicius, Commentaire sur les Catégories*, fasc. 1, Leiden 1990, 94-6.
I. Hadot, ed., *Simplicius, Commentaire sur le Manuel d'Epictète*, Leiden 1996, ch. 3.
Dominic O'Meara, *Platonopolis*, Oxford 2003, ch. 6.

Mathematics

As regards mathematics, we have already seen that Ammonius *in Cat.* 5,31-6,22, recommends putting it late, whereas Proclus studied it early. Ammonius gives his rationale in the Commentary on Porphyry's *Isagoge* 12,20-13,7. Because mathematics abstracts from matter, it makes a ladder from Physics to Theology (compare the talk of rungs in *Anon Proleg*). But Olympiodorus *Prolegomena* 8,29-9,13 reveals the extent of the disagreements. Although he backs the order logic, ethics, physics, mathematics, theology, he reports that those who wanted mathematics first cited the inscription said to have been above the door of Plato's Academy, 'Let no one enter without knowledge of Geometry'.

(6) Olympiodorus *Prolegomena* 8,29-9,12

The third inquiry concerned the point from which to start on the Aristote-

lian treatises, and on this there have arisen four opinions. Those of the first opinion say that one must begin with ethics, those of the second with physics, others with mathematics and others with logic. The ethics party says that one must first set in order one's own ethical character, and then begin on the other studies. For just as those whose eyes have been in the dark cannot look towards the sun, so a person weighed down by passions of the soul cannot take hold of these [studies]. That is what is said by those who promote the view that one must put the ethical ahead of the rest. But those who state that one must put physics ahead say that one must begin from natural things because they share our nurture and character. Those who back mathematics say that one must put mathematical things first because over Plato's school there was inscribed, 'Let no one enter who lacks geometry'. Others say that one must put logic first because all the sciences mentioned need it, at least if what is proved in them is proved by way of syllogism and demonstration, and logic (as stated) arises in connection with these [techniques].

[9,5] Here is what we propose. We say that as far as the order of things is concerned, one must put ethics before the rest because it gives us the right rhythm and sets our ethical character in order. But because we do not set our ethical character in order and beautify it in a layman's way, like irrational animals, but through syllogistic instruction and demonstrative method, it is right to set logic ahead of ethics and mathematics and theology. But among these three subjects one must set [another, viz] physics ahead of mathematics and mathematics ahead of theology. RRKS

(7) Ammonius *in Isag.* 12,20-13,7

Mathematics is in between [physics and theology] with good reason. For since we cannot be led up immediately from natural to divine things and from what is altogether inseparable from matter to what is altogether separable, we travel by way of mathematicals which are in one respect separable, in another inseparable. They are actually called mathematicals (*mathêmata*) because it is by learning (*mathein*) them and by getting used to thinking without reference to bodies that we have to be led up to divine things. The divine Plotinus himself says [cf. 1.3 [20] 3 (5-7)] 'mathematical studies must be offered to the young, to accustom them to incorporeal nature'. For if we want to lead them up immediately from physics to theology, we will blind them, and they will be like those who go immediately from a very dark house into the light. One must first spend time in a house which is proportionately illuminated, and only then go to the brightest house. So one must after physics spend time among mathematicals and in that way be led up to theology. For mathematicals are a sort of ladder (*klimax*) and bridge (*gephura*) sharing with natural things their inseparability [from matter] and with divine things their separability. RRKS

Reading

Ian Mueller, Foreword to 1992 edition of *Proclus, A Commentary on the First Book of Euclid's Elements*, translated by Glenn Morrow, Princeton, New Jersey 1992.

15(b) Procedures for beginning ascent

Plotinus appeals to Plato's ascent through beauty in the *Symposium* as a first stage and to his ascent through dialectic in the *Republic* (as further explained in *Phaedrus* and *Sophist*) as a second stage. The passage seems to have influenced Augustine's famous conversation with his mother at Ostia, leading to mystical experience, in *Confessions* 9.10.

(1) Plotinus 1.3 [20] 1 (12) – 4 (23)

The journey has two stages for all, whether they are still ascending or whether they have completed the ascent. The first stage starts from the lower world, and the second is for those who have already reached the intelligible world and have gained a toehold there, so to speak, but who must still proceed on their journey until they have reached the furthest point of the region to what is 'the goal of their journey', their arrival at the summit of the intelligible world. But that part of the journey must wait; we must first try to describe the ascent. To start with we must make distinctions between the types of man, beginning with the musician and his nature. We must picture him as volatile and put in a flutter by beauty, but less able to stir himself; he is amenable to random impressions, and in the way that nervous people react to noise he is sensitive to sounds and their beauty; he always avoids discord and disharmony in melody and rhythm, and welcomes regularity and graceful form. After his education in these perceptible sounds, rhythms and forms he must be guided in the following way: he must be taught and guided to separate the material aspect of the things on which the proportions and ratios supervene and guided to the beauty in them; so that he learns that what put him in a flutter (*ptoeisthai*, cf. *Phaedo* 68C9; *Rep.* 439D7, and Stoic *ptoia*) was intelligible harmony and in sum no mere instance of beauty but Beauty itself; he must have the rational structures of philosophy instilled in him, and from there he must be led to a belief in what he already possesses without realising it. What these rational structures are we shall discuss later.

2. The lover – a status the musician may attain and either remain there or proceed further – has a dim memory of beauty, but he is unable to comprehend it as something apart, since he receives a shock from (*plêttesthai*) the beautiful things he sees, and is put in a flutter by them. So he must be taught not to fall into a flutter about a single body, but should be led by reasoned argument towards all bodies which show that beauty is the same in all of them; we must tell him that it is something other than bodies, is derived from elsewhere than bodies and is present to a greater degree in entities other than bodies – pointing out to him for example beautiful behaviour and beautiful laws, since this will acclimatise him to what is to

be loved in the incorporeal – and that is to be found in the arts, the sciences and the virtues. Then we must bring all these under a single heading by showing how they come to be what they are. It is from the virtues that he can now ascend to Intellect, to real Being. Once there he can pursue the higher path.

3. The philosopher is naturally disposed [to make the journey], and he is the one who is, so to speak, 'winged [Plato *Phaedrus* 246C1]' and not, like the others, in need of detachment (*khôrisis*); he is already directed upwards and merely needs someone to indicate his route. So he must be given instruction and release, although he is by nature a willing learner and already free of constraint. He must be given mathematics to acclimatise himself to intellection and belief in the unembodied, which he will quickly take to, being a ready learner; being naturally virtuous he must be trained to perfect his virtue. After mathematics he must be given the principles of dialectic and be made a consummate dialectician.

4. What is this dialectic, which must be given to the musician and lover too?

It is the frame of mind (*hexis*) which is able to pronounce logically on anything – what it is, what differentiates it from other things, what common features it has with them, to what class it belongs and where it stands in that class, and whether it truly is what it is; it can also state how many real Beings there are, and how many non-Beings different from real Being. It discusses what is good and what is not, what is classed under the former and what under the latter, what is clearly everlasting and what is not; in all cases it employs knowledge, not opinion. When it has finished ranging the sensible world it settles in the intelligible and there conducts its study. It abandons falsehood and nurtures the soul in the so-called 'plains of truth'; it employs Platonic division to distinguish betwen the forms, to establish what each is, to arrive at the primary genera and their possible combinations, until it has covered the whole of the intelligible world; it then returns by way of analysis to its starting point. There it comes to rest, content at least about the being of that world; it no longer busies itself but arrives at unity and contemplates. It leaves the so-called rational study of propositions (*protaseis*) and syllogisms, as it would the knowledge of how to write, to another field of study. It considers some of the features of such study prerequisite to its field, but judges them as it does other things – some useful, others superfluous and belonging to the science that finds a use for them. BF

Plotinus repeatedly stresses, and Augustine acknowledges the Platonist influences on himself, that the search for Intellect and One, and the mystical experience of them, are to be found *within*. Cf. also Augustine *Conf.* 7.17.23; 10.7.11; *Lib. Arb.* 2.14-16; *Trin.* 9-11. And see above, the section on Neoplatonism in the Introduction, on this inward turn.

Preliminary search for Soul, Intellect and One within:

(2) Plotinus 5.1 [10] 12 (12-20)

Therefore if there is to be apprehension of things present in the way described we must turn (*epistrephein*) the apprehending faculty inwards and make it concentrate its attention (*prosokhê*) there. BF

It is as if someone were waiting to hear a voice he wanted to hear, and standing clear of other voices, pricked up his ear for the better sound, whenever it should come. So too here, one must leave aside perceptible hearing except insofar as necessary, and keep the soul's power to apprehend pure and ready to hear the sounds from above. RRKS

Union with the Intellect within:

(3) Plotinus 4.8 [6] 1 (1-3)

I have often woken out of my body to myself, withdrawing from everything else into myself. How great and miraculous a beauty have I seen! BF

(4) Plotinus 1.6 [1] 9 (6-7)

How, then, could you see what sort of beauty a good soul has? Go back into yourself and see. RRKS

(5) Plotinus 5.8 [31] 10 (31-43)

But by those who do not see the whole only the impact [from outside] is recognised. But for those who as it were are drunk and filled with nectar throughout, because the beauty has gone through their whole soul, the result is that they become more than spectators. For it is no longer that the One is outside and the contemplator is outside it. Rather the keen-sighted has what is seen within himself. When he has it, for the most part he does not know that he has it, and looks at it as if it were outside, because he looks as one seeing and because he wants to see. RRKS

But one must transfer into oneself what one looks at, and must look at it as one and as oneself, as if someone possessed by god, taken over by Phoebus or one of the Muses, were to seek his vision of the god within himself if he had the power to observe god within himself. BF

Union with the One within:

(6) Plotinus 6.9 [9] 7 (2-5; 16-23)

Contemplate it [the One] without throwing your thought outwards, for it is not placed somewhere leaving other things bereft of it, but is always present to the one who can touch it. ...

If this is so, the soul must let go everything external and turn (*epis-*

traphênai) altogether towards the inside. It must not incline towards anything external, but ignoring everything, as previously with sense perception but then even in the realm of the Forms, and ignoring even itself, it must come to be in contemplation of that [One], and after having come to be with it, and having had sufficient intimacy (*homilein*), as it were, with it, it must come and tell another person too, if it can, about the intercourse (*sunousia*) there. RRKS

Plotinus' influence on Augustine:

(7) Augustine *Confessions* 7.10.16

Being hence [by the Platonic books] admonished to return into myself, I entered into my innermost recesses, with you, God, as guide, and I was enabled because you had become my helper. I entered and I saw with my soul's eye, such as it was, the unchangeable light above my soul's eye and above my mind. RRKS

For the final mystical vision, however, one can only wait, as for the sunrise.

(8) Plotinus 5.5 [32] 8 (3-5) translated in **18(b)** below

Reading

R. Sorabji, *Time, Creation and the Continuum*, London & Ithaca, NY 1983, ch. 11.
Gerard Verbeke, 'Connaissance de soi et connaissance de Dieu chez Saint Augustin', *Augustiniana* 4, 1954, 495-515, reprinted in his *D'Aristote à Thomas d'Aquin. Antécédents de la pensée moderne*, Leuven 1990, 367-87.

16. Ineffability and the Rejection of Words

16(a) Negative theology, ineffability of the One, uselessness of words

Plato *Timaeus* 28C says that it is impossible to describe (*legein*) God to everyone (the qualification 'to everyone' was often omitted especially in Christian borrowings), and *Republic* 506E will only represent the nature of the Good (later identified with the Neoplatonist One) by the simile of the Sun. Cf. the letters ascribed to Plato, *Ep.* 2, 312E-313A; *Ep.* 7, 341C; 343D-344D. Philo of Alexandria (*Somn.* 1.67) and the Middle Platonists, Apuleius (*de Plat.* 1.5) and Alcinous the author of the *Didaskalikos* ch. 10, put this in terms of God being unspeakable (*arrhêtos*, *indictus*), or nearly so (*Didaskalikos*). Philo adds the Stoic term *akatalêptos*, to say that God cannot be known by any ideas (*ideai*).

Plotinus, followed by Proclus, Damascius, and Anonymous *in Parm.* IV Hadot II, 78 suggests that in trying to speak about the supreme God, the One, we may be speaking only about ourselves. We can speak around it, but we cannot declare it. We can only use imitation and riddle. The One itself is silent. Quite generally in the intelligible world, there is no speech, and we may compare how we ourselves tell things without speech by the look in someone's eyes. The gods, in a passage cited above under **3(d)**, 5.8 [31] 5 (19) – 6 (12) are said to see not propositions (5.8 [31] 5 (19-25), cf. 1.3 [20] 4 (19), just quoted), but images, and correspondingly Egyptian priests are said to use pictorial hieroglyphs to express that world, 5.8 [31] 6 (6-12). The extent to which the experience is not even like seeing is described in 5.8.10, but Plotinus does not move to Schopenhauer's view that certain things can be expressed only by music.

(1) Plato *Timaeus* 28C3-5

It is some task to discover (*heurein*) the Maker and Father of this universe, and, on finding him, it is impossible to describe (*legein*) him to everyone. RRKS

(2) Plotinus 6.9 [9] 3 (49-54)

To call [the One] a cause is to attribute an accident not to it but to ourselves, because we gain something from it, while it remains in itself. In fact we should not say 'it' or 'is' if we are to be accurate; it is rather as if we circled round (*perithein*) it on the outside in our desire to interpret our own experiences, on some occasions coming close to it, on others falling back because of our perplexities about it. BF

(3) Plotinus 6.9 [9] 4 (11-14)

That is why Plato wrote 'it cannot be expressed in the spoken (*rhêton*) or

written (*grapton*) word' [*Letter* 7, 341C5]; but we speak and write in order to direct others towards it, to awaken them from talk to a vision, as if showing the way to someone wishing to view a spectacle. BF

(4) Plotinus 6.9 [9] 11 (25-8)

If one searches in a different way, one finds nothing. These are imitations; so riddling answers are given by the wise among prophets in reply to the question: 'How can that god be seen?' BF

(5) Plotinus 5.3 [49] 14 (1-8)

Q: How then can we ourselves talk about [the One]?

A: Well, we do say things about it, but we do not describe (*legein*) [Plato *Tim.* 28C3-5] it, having neither intellection nor knowledge of it.

Q: So how can we talk about it if we do not possess it?

A: Well, even if we do not possess it through knowledge, does that mean that we cannot possess it at all? We do possess it, in such a way as to be able to talk about it, though not to describe it.

For we can say what it is not, although we cannot say what it is. So we base what we say about it on its posteriors. Even if we cannot describe it, we are not prevented from possessing it. BF

(6) Plotinus 5.1 [10] 6 (12-13)

[The One] stands on its own as if inside a temple; it remains in silence, transcending all things. BF

(7) Plotinus 5.8 [31] 5 (19) – 6 (12), translated under **3(d)** above

(8) Plotinus 4.3 [27] 18 (13-22)

We should not think that souls use vocal sounds (*phônai*) when they are in the intelligible world, or at all, even though they have bodies [in their passage through] the heavens. Anything that employs discursive speech (*dialegesthai*) here [on earth] to meet a need or settle an argument has no place there. Souls there do everything in order according to nature, and give no commands or advice, recognising (*gignôskein*) things from each other by understanding (*sunesis*). Even on earth we can recognise much about a person who says nothing from the look in his eyes. There the whole body is pure and each is like an eye and nothing is hidden or wrapped up, but before one speaks to another, the other has seen and recognised. BF, RRKS

Plotinus' belief that Egyptian hieroglyphs (unless he meant other ideograms on temple walls) stand directly for ideas, bypassing reference to words by a pictorial technique, substantially delayed the decipherment of Egyptian hieroglyphs, when

Athanasius Kircher took it up. The recent decipherment of Meso-American Maya inscriptions was delayed by a similar belief. Plotinus' views on Egyptian symbols were subsequently reinforced by the treatise on hieroglyphs of Horapollo, head of the Alexandrian school of Philosophy and Rhetoric.

Reading

Michael D. Coe, *Breaking the Code*, New York 1992, 16-18.

Marcus Hirschle, *Sprachphilosophie und Namenmagie im Neoplatonismus*, Meisenheim am Glam 1979, 68.

Maurice Pope, *The Story of Decipherment*, rev. ed., London 1999, adds a section on the Mayas, 195-203.

Similarly Proclus and Damascius treat the One as ineffable and repeat that in trying to describe it, we are merely speaking about ourselves.

(9) Proclus *in Parm.* 1073,26-30

But the first is above Form, and it is not fitting to apply to it anything that belongs among secondary things, nor to transpose to it what belongs to ourselves, since we shall inadvertently be describing ourselves and not it. RRKS

(10) Damascius *On First Principles* vol. 1, 8,12-20 Westerink-Combès

If the tables are turned on us by what is said when we say about the One that it is ineffable (*aporrhêton*), that it is the inaccessible sanctuary of all things and that it is not apprehensible by means of intellectual knowledge (*aperinoêton*), then we ought to recognise that these constitute the words and concepts of our own labours which dare to be curious about it, but stop on the threshold of the inaccessible sanctuary, without conveying anything about it at all. Rather, they reveal our own (*oikeia*) experiences (*pathê*) concerning the One and our perplexities (*aporiai*) and misapprehensions and that not even clearly, but by means of hints and the latter on behalf of those who are capable of hearing them. SR

Proclus allows that soul vehicles permit unspoken communication, but recognises also incorporeal recognition. See references from *in Remp.* 2.164-7, translated under **8(b)** above.

Porphyry sees silence as the right worship of the highest God.

(11) Porphyry *Abstinence* 2.34.1-4, translated under **18(a)** below

Proclus ends his study of the One in his commentary on Plato's *Parmenides* with silence.

(12) Proclus *in Parm.* book 7, 76 Klibansky

This seems to be the point of the last question that Parmenides asks when

he concludes this long development of the argument about the One. And so it is right that Aristotle also, following him, [passes from] the nature of Being to the inexpressible itself; for by means of a negation he too removes all the negations. It is with silence, then, that he brings to completion the study of the One. GM, JD

Plato's *Parmenides*, the subject of the culminating commentary in the Neoplatonist curriculum, draws contradictions out of attempts to conceive the One, and this confirmed the Neoplatonists in their view of its ineffability.

Proclus, commenting on Plato *Timaeus* 28C3-5, sees that it creates a problem not simply about knowing the One, but about knowing the Demiurgic Intellect. Our souls cannot discover (*heurein*) that Intellect by opinion or scientific understanding (*heuresis doxastikê, epistêmonikê*, cf. **3(c)** above), but only by a direct intuition (*epibolê autoptikê*), a contacting (*epaphê*) and a union (*henôsis*) with that Intellect. Nor can our souls, upon discovery, describe (*exangeilai, exenenkein*) that Intellect to others by nouns and verbs, because detailing it (*diexodos*) by such combination (*sunthesis*) cannot bring out its unity, Proclus *in Tim.* 2.301,22-302,1; 303,8-16 Diehl.

Elsewhere, talking of the Forms in the Demiurgic Intellect, Proclus contrasts intellect which thinks all things as one with soul which sees them one by one (*kath' hen*), Proclus *in Parm.* 807,29-808,24 Cousin.

(13) Proclus *in Tim.* 1.301,22-302,1; 302,8-14; 303,12-16 Diehl

The soul must approach the Maker of the Universe by itself becoming an intellective (*noeros*) world and as far as possible becoming like (*homoiôthênai*) the whole and the intelligible world, and by this approach must be made somehow akin (*oikeiôthênai*) to him through continuous intuition (*epibolê*). For his uninterrupted activity directed to each thing calls forth and rekindles the rational principles in us. And through becoming akin the soul must stand at the Father's door and become unified (*henôthênai*) with him.

[302,8] Discovering (*heurein*) is like this: not discovery by opinion (*doxastikê heuresis*), for that is ambiguous and not far from an irrational form of life. Nor discovery by scientific understanding (*epistemonikê*), for that is by syllogistic reasoning and is composite (*sunthetos*) and does not contact the intellective (*noeros*) substance of the intellective Demiurge. Rather, it is by direct intuition (*autoptikê epibolê*) and contacting (*epaphê*), a becoming like and akin (*homoiôthênai, oikeiôthênai*, cf. Anon. in *Theaetetum* 7,14-19), of the intelligible (*noêton*) and by union with the Demiurge's Intellect.

[303,12] How could one discover (*heurein*) the substance of the Demiurge by means other than intellective (*noerôs*)? And having thus discovered it, how could one declare (*exangeilai*) what one had seen, or bring it out (*exenenkein*) for others through nouns and verbs? For the detailing (*diexodos*) which is conveyed by combinations (*en sunthesei*) cannot represent his unitary and simple nature. RRKS

(14) Proclus *in Parm.* 807,24-808,24

Plato *Parmenides* 130B: 'And of things like these,' said Parmenides, 'is there a form of Justice in and by itself, and of Beauty and Goodness and all such things?'

'Yes,' said Socrates.

The divine and Demiurgic Intellect contains pluralities in unity, divisible things undivided and distiguishables undiscriminated. Soul is what first separates these contents that exist previously in perfect unity in that Intellect – not our soul only, but the divine Soul too. For Soul has not been granted thoughts that are established on the level of eternity, but she aims at grasping the full actuality of Intellect; and in her striving for this perfection and for the form of comprehension that belongs to that one and simple being she circles around (*peritheein*) Intellect as in a dance, and as she shifts her attention from point to point divides the undivided mass of the Ideas (*eidê*), looking separately at the Idea of Beauty, and separately at the Idea of Justice, and separately at each of the others, thinking of them all individually (*kath' hen panta*) and not all together (*homou panta*). For, to put it briefly, Soul is third in rank from the One and is naturally actualised in this way. For the One is one only and precedes thought, Intellect thinks all Ideas as one (*hôs hen*), and Soul sees them all one by one (*kath' hen*). So division is the peculiar function of Soul, since she lacks the power of thinking all things simultaneously in unity and has been allotted the thinking of them all separately – all, because she imitates Intellect, and separately, for this is her peculiar property; for the power to divide and define appears first in Soul. GM, JD

Damascius describes the appearance that the intelligible world is multiple as like the breaking up of uniform sunlight into the colours of the rainbow, and tells us instead to shut our eyes, and open only the eye of the soul, which sees no distinctions, *On First Principles* 3.142.4-6; 3.136.8-17, both translated in **Logic and Metaphysics 14(b)**.

As regards the One, Damascius describes how knowledge requires differentiation, and so apparent knowledge of the One turns into ignorance upon approach.

(15) Damascius *On First Principles* vol. 1, 83,22-84,7 Westerink-Combès

So the One too is knowable insofar as it does not accept knowledge which approaches it, but appears knowable from afar and grants knowledge of itself, but it is not as with other things that the more knowledge approaches, the more it knows what it is approaching, but rather the reverse, it knows it less. The knowledge is dissolved by the One into ignorance (*agnôsia*). This is to be expected, since knowledge requires differentiation, as said before, whereas differentiation, on approaching the One, is folded into unification, so that knowledge too overflows into ignorance. RRKS

Negative theology is the idea that we can only say what God is not. For antece-

dents, see Cicero *ND* 1.30, commenting on Plato *Tim.*; Philo *Spec. Leg.* 1.43-50; Alcinous *Didaskalikos* ch. 10; Numenius fr. 17 Des Places. In Plotinus the One is sometimes positively described, especially in 6.8, but in 5.3 [49] 14 (1-8), translated above in this section, Plotinus states that we can say only what the One is *not*. Proclus' acceptance of negative theology was transmitted to Christianity through pseudo-Dionysius, who passed off his imitation as a Christian work. Damascius goes further and denies that we can even say what the One is not. As regards what is beyond the One, Damascius will not even allow us to speak of our ignorance, but only of our super-ignorance (*huperagnôsia*).

In Indian philosophy, scepticism was an important influence on mysticism. But for the relation of scepticism to the Neoplatonists and to Damascius in particular, see **Logic and Metaphysics 9(f)**.

(16) Proclus *in Parm.* 1108,19-29

It is better, then, as Plato did, to rest content with the negations, and by means of these to exhibit the transcendent superiority of the One – that it is neither intelligible nor intellectual, nor anything else of these things which are cognisable by us by means of our individual mental activities; for inasmuch as it is the cause of all things, it is no one of all things; and it is not the case that it is unknowable to us while being knowable to itself; for if it is absolutely unknowable to us, we do not even know this, that it is knowable to itself, but of even this we are ignorant; for even to say that it is the 'fount of divinity' – even as the Beautiful Itself and the primally beautiful is the henad of all beautiful things, and Equality Itself and primary equality is the henad of all equal things (for not even in the case of these do we enquire what Beauty Itself is, but we recognise that it is the fount of beautiful things, and we think this to be sufficient), even so, then, also the One is the fount of all divinity, inasmuch as it is God Itself (for every god, inasmuch as it is god, derives its subsistence from the One) – not even this is absolutely correct. GM, JD

(17) Damascius *On First Principles* vol. 1, 10,22-4 Westerink-Combès

Perhaps the absolutely ineffable is ineffable in the sense that one cannot even state about it that it is ineffable. JO

(18) Damascius *On First Principles* vol. 1, 22,15-19 Westerink-Combès

If, then, it is necessary to give some indications (*ti endeiknusthai*), one has to use the negation of these (predicates) and say that it is not one, not plural, not fertile, not infertile, neither causative nor incausative; and these negations reverse themselves ad infinitum, in a way completely beyond my understanding. JO

(19) Damascius *On First Principles* vol. 1, 15,18-16,1 Westerink-Combès

To that which is absolutely not, in no way at all, nothing that in any way

whatsoever is, can belong, as Plato says, not even non-being, that is, nor, in general, privation. But even the phrase 'absolutely not, in no way at all' is an invalid expression of its meaning. For this expression is a being and its meaning is something among beings. And the object of opinion, indeed, is a being; even if one is actually opining that it is absolutely not, nonetheless this very object of opinion is a being among beings. JO

(20) Damascius *On First Principles* vol. 1, 84,16-19 Westerink-Combès

What is beyond (*epekeina*) the One is in every way ineffable (*aporrêton*). We do not agree that we know it or are ignorant of it (*agnoein*). Rather, we even have a super-ignorance (*huperagnôsia*) towards it. By its proximity it conceals even the One. RRKS

Reading

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16(b) Scepticism: relation to theology: see Logic 9(f)

Reading

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17. Ethics

For the role of ethics in the curriculum, see **15(a)** above.

17(a) Types of virtue, social vs. contemplative

The Neoplatonists distinguish different levels of virtue. Merely natural virtue depends on the blend of hot, cold, fluid, and dry in the body. The lowest level of the proper virtues, civic virtue, is connected with *metriopatheia* (Porphyry *Sentences* 32, 23,4; 25,6-7 Lamberz), moderation of emotions; the next level up, purified virtue, as described by Plotinus below, with *apatheia* or freedom from emotion. At the level of civic virtue, Theodore of Asine is reported as holding in accordance with Plato's *Republic* that men and women have the same virtue and need the same education. The *Republic* is explicitly about civic virtue (*dêmotikê*, *Rep.* 6, 500D8; *politikê* 4, 430C3).

Porphyry distinguishes four levels of virtue, civic (*politikai*), purificatory (*kathartikai*), contemplative (*theoretikai*), and paradigmatic (*paradeigmatikai*), *Sentences* 32. Olympiodorus below and the *Anonymous Prologomena* ch. 26, translated under **15(a)** above, insert virtues of character (*êthikê*) produced by habituation before the civic virtues on the grounds that they are not rational. It was seen under **15(a)** that Plato's *Gorgias* and *Phaedo* were selected for the curriculum on the grounds that they dealt with social and purificatory virtues respectively. Iamblichus, celebrating the role of the theurgic priest, adds at the top hieratic or theurgic virtue, on whose relation to the paradigmatic virtues different authors disagree. Olympiodorus no longer lists theurgic virtue as one of his five but he does discuss the role of theurgy immediately after discussing his five virtues.

Different levels of virtue are already present in Plotinus 1.2 [19], on which Porphyry *Sentences* 32 is virtually a commentary. Moreover, both authors take the four cardinal virtues of Plato's *Republic*, wisdom, courage, temperance and justice, and give them different definitions at different levels of virtue. It is naturally at the level of civic virtue that the definitions are closest to Plato's, since that is the level which Plato is discussing.

On natural virtue as due to blend:

(1) Damascius *in Phaed.* I, §138 Westerink, translated in **6(a)** above

(2) Olympiodorus *Lecture 8 on Phaedo* §2, lines 2-7 Westerink, translated below

The four main civic virtues are defined by Plotinus 1.2 [19] 1 (16-21) in the same way as the four virtues of Plato *Republic* 427E-434D. Porphyry connects them with moderated emotion.

(3) Plotinus 1.2 [19] 1 (16-21)

It is implausible that [the intelligible] has the virtues called civic (*politikai*): practical wisdom (*phronêsis*) concerned with the reasoning [part of the soul], courage with the irascible [part], temperance consisting in a certain agreement and harmony [cf. Plato *Republic* 431E8] of the appetitive [part] with reason, and justice as each of these parts together sticking to its own job [*oikeiopragia*, *Republic* 434C8] as regards ruling and being ruled [*Republic* 443B2]. RRKS

(4) Porphyry *Sentences* 32, 23,4-12 Lamberz

The civic virtues, based as they are on moderation of the passions, consist in following and going along with the process of reasoning relative to our duty in the field of practical action (*kata tas praxeis*). And that is why, since they have regard to a community (*koinônia*) of action which avoids doing harm to one's neighbours, they are called civic by reason of their concern with gregariousness (*sunagelasmos*) and community. They are as follows: [repeats Plotinus, 1.2 [19] 1 (17-21)]. RRKS

Purificatory virtues are defined as more divorced from the body and from emotion.

(5) Plotinus 1.2 [19] 3 (10-21)

In what sense, then, do we say that these are purifications and that we are most assimilated [to God] when we are purified? The soul is evil when it is mixed with the body and comes to share its experiences (*homopathês*) and all its opinions. So the soul would be good and virtuous, if it were not to share the opinions, but were to act on its own (that would be exercising intellect (*noein*) and practical wisdom (*phronein*)), and if it were not to share the experiences (that would be temperance) and if it were to have no fear in withdrawing from the body (that would be courage), and if reason and intellect were to lead it and the others were not to oppose (that would be justice). One would not be mistaken if one gave the name 'assimilation to God' to such a disposition of the soul, one in which it understands and is free from emotion (*apathês*) in this way. RRKS

(6) Porphyry *Sentences* 32, 24,9-25,6 Lamberz

And that is why, at the purificatory level, practical wisdom (*to phronein*) consists in the soul's not sharing any opinions with the body, but acting on its own, and this is perfected by the pure exercise of the intellect (*katharôs noein*); temperance is the result of taking care not to share the experiences of [the body] (*homopathein*); courage is not being afraid to depart from the body as if one were falling into some void of non-being; and justice is the

result of reason and intellect leading the soul and nothing opposing them. JD

Paradigmatic and higher virtues: Plotinus refers to higher virtues, while Porphyry identifies and names them.

(7) Plotinus 1.2 [19] 6 (3-6; 11-26); 1.2 [19] 7 (3-7)

If, then, any of these [shocks (*plêgai*)] happens to him unchosen, such a man would be double, daemon and god, or rather would have with him another being who had a different virtue. But if there is none of this, he is simply a god. ...

What then is each of the virtues for such a man? Theoretical and practical wisdom (*sophia, phronêsis*) consist in contemplation of what intellect contains in direct contact with itself. There are two kinds of each sort of wisdom, one in intellect and one in soul. In intellect it is not virtue, but in soul it is. What is it in intellect? Its activity and what it is. But in soul what is from there, but is residing in something different, is virtue. For Justice-itself is not individual virtue, but a sort of paradigm for it. What is from it, residing in the soul, is virtue. For virtue is virtue belonging to someone, whereas the 'itself' in each case belongs to itself, not to a different thing.

If justice is sticking to one's own job (*oikeiopragia* [*Republic* 434C8]), does it always depend on a plurality of parts? Rather, one kind depends on plurality, when the parts are many, but the other is in general sticking to one's own job, even though it belongs to a unity. At any rate true Justice-itself belongs to a unity related to [itself], which contains nothing different, whereas the other contains differences.

So for the actual case of the soul, the greater justice is activity directed towards intellect, temperance is the turning (*strophê*) inwards towards intellect, courage is freedom from emotion, by assimilation to the naturally emotionless entity towards which it looks. ...

In intellect, intellection (*noêsis*) is scientific understanding (*epistêmê*) and theoretical wisdom (*sophia*), temperance is direction to oneself (*to pros auton*), sticking to one's own job is one's own job, and the analogue of courage is immateriality and remaining on one's own in purity.

In the soul, then, gazing towards intellect is theoretical and practical wisdom (*sophia, phronêsis*), which are virtues belonging to the soul. RRKS

(8) Porphyry *Sentences* 32, 27,7-29,7 Lamberz

There is therefore another class of virtues, a third one, after the purificatory and the civic, which are those of the soul as it is exercising intellectively (*noerôs*). Theoretical and practical wisdom (*sophia, phronêsis*) consist in contemplation of what intellect contains; justice is sticking to one's own job (*oikeiopragia* [*Republic* 434C8]) in following after intellect,

while directing its activity towards intellect; temperance is the turning (*strophê*) inwards towards intellect; courage is freedom from emotion, by assimilation to the naturally emotionless entity towards which it looks. And by the way these virtues imply each other, as do the [higher entities].

The fourth class of virtues is that of the paradigmatic, which are, we say, actually to be found in intellect seeing that they are superior to those of the soul and are the paradigms of these, the virtues of the soul being their likenesses. At this level, intellect is that in which the paradigms enjoy existence together, practical wisdom (reading with mss *phronêsis*) is scientific understanding (*epistêmê*), theoretical wisdom (*sophia*) is intellect in the act of knowing (*nous gignôskôn*), temperance is direction to oneself (*to pros auton*), sticking to one's own job is one's own job, and courage is self-sameness and remaining on one's own in purity through superabundance of power. RRKS

It is disputed how far Plotinus' ethics is other-worldly. How far is he concerned about other people's worldly worries? Porphyry is clear in stating that only civic virtues have to do with practical actions in society. He even calls them practical virtues. We should add to that that, according to Plotinus, the higher virtues *supersede* the civic ones. Their owner follows different principles, giving different verdicts, and lives the life of the *gods*. The successive definitions of the kinds of virtue increasingly tie them to intellect.

Admittedly, Porphyry's *Life of Plotinus* tells us that Plotinus undertook many social duties, for example as guardian of orphans, and as counsellor to the suicidal Porphyry, chs 9 and 11. No doubt, the higher virtues still require this, where possible. But Plotinus warns that since the verdicts of different virtues may conflict, one may have to be selective. Porphyry adds that one will act according to lower virtues only as circumstances allow, and that the virtues to concentrate on are the purificatory, because they are the highest that can be attained in this life.

Yet in Porphyry's *Abstinence*, it turns out that even the higher virtues of the philosopher and the shedding of emotion call for a great deal of practical advice on how to conduct oneself. Refraining from meat and animal sacrifice is only one example. See also **18(g)**(2) below. An other-worldly goal evidently calls for some worldly wisdom, but Porphyry is anxious that it should not be wisdom gained from indulgence in temptation, 1.35.2, translated in **13(h)**.

The question whether the happy life is one of pure contemplation, or also of practical virtue, is important to Plato's *Republic*, where the philosophers return to the cave to look after practical affairs, 519-520, and it is central to Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* 10.7-8. Plotinus and Porphyry have given an answer by shifting virtue itself in the direction of contemplation, which gives philosophers more of what they want. However, for Aristotle's commitment to practical virtue as well as contemplation, see **Logic 18(a)**.

(9) Plotinus 1.2 [19] 7 (13-28)

Whether a person who has the greater virtues also has the lesser in actuality, or in another way, has to be studied case by case. Take practical wisdom: if it is going to use [in its greater forms] different principles, how does the original virtue still remain, even inactive? And if one kind of

practical wisdom permits so much, the other a different amount, and one kind of temperance moderates, the other altogether removes [emotion]. Similarly with the other virtues too in general, once practical wisdom has been changed. Or will one know the virtues and know how much to take from each? Perhaps one will act according to different ones at different times, depending on circumstances (*peristatikôs*). But having come to greater principles and different measures, one will act in accordance with those, for example locating temperance not in the original moderation, but in general as far as possible separating [oneself from emotion], and in general living not the life of a good human, which civic virtue values, but having left this behind and chosen the life of the gods. RRKS

(10) Porphyry *Sentences* 32, 30,1-31,11 Lamberz

Whoever possesses the greater virtues also necessarily possesses the lesser, but the converse is not the case. On the other hand, he who possesses the greater virtues will not, by reason of the fact that he possesses also the lesser ones, conduct himself primarily (*proêgoumenôs*) in accordance with the lesser ones, but will do so only according to the circumstances (*kata peristasin*) that confront him in the realm of generation. For their aims (*skopoi*) are different, as has been said, and generically distinct. That of the civic virtues is to impose moderation on the emotions in relation to activities concerned with natural interests. That of the purificatory virtues is to separate completely from the emotions that which has just taken on (reading *lambanon*) moderation. That of the next ones is to direct one's activity towards intellect without any longer giving thought to separating oneself from the emotions. As for that of those virtues whose role it is no longer to direct their activity *towards* intellect, but which have actually come into confluence (*sundromê*) with its essence, [Schwyzer supplies] <it is no longer possible to describe their activity>. In view of this, then, he who acts in accordance with the practical (*praktikai*) virtues is, we say, a god man (*spoudaios*). He who acts in accordance with the purificatory ones is a daemonic human, or even a good daemon. He who acts only according to those which are directed to intellect is a god, and he who practises the paradigmatic virtues is a father of gods [a term from the *Chaldaean Oracles*, appropriated by Iamblichus for himself in replying in *Myst.* as Abammon to Porphyry's *Letter to Anebo*].

We ought therefore to direct our attention most of all to the purificatory virtues, basing ourselves on the reflection that the attainment of these is possible in this life, and that it is through these that an ascent may be made to the more august levels. JD

Reading

John Dillon, 'An ethic for the late antique sage', in Lloyd Gerson, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Plotinus*, Cambridge 1996, 315-35.

Owen Goldin, 'Porphyry, nature and community', *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 18, 2001, 353-71.
Dominic O'Meara, *Platonopolis: Platonic Political Philosophy in Late Antiquity*, Oxford 2003, ch. 4.
Alexandrine Schniewind, 'Quelles conditions pour une éthique plotinienne?' in Michel Fattal, ed., *Études sur Plotin*, Paris 2000, 47-73.

Iamblichus and theurgic or hieratic virtues:

(11) Damascius *in Phaed.* I, §143-4 Westerink

[143] Paradigmatic virtues are those of the soul when it no longer contemplates the intellect (contemplation involving separateness), but has already reached the stage of being by participation the intellect that is the paradigm of all things; therefore these virtues too are called 'paradigmatic', inasmuch as virtues belong primarily to intellect itself. This category is added by Iamblichus in his treatise *On Virtues*. [144] Lastly, there are the hieratic virtues, which belong to the godlike part of the soul; they correspond to all the categories mentioned above, with this difference that while the others are existential, these are unitary. This kind, too, has been outlined by Iamblichus, and discussed more explicitly by the school of Proclus. LGW

(12) Olympiodorus *Lecture 8 on Phaedo* § 2, lines 1-20 Westerink

Since, however, we have touched upon the subject of virtues, let us enumerate the degrees of virtues. They are five. Virtues are either (1) natural, resulting from our blend (*krasis*), or (2) virtues of character (*êthikai*), i.e. due to habituation. Natural virtues are especially proper to brute animals, as they are the outcome of a blend: all lions are constitutionally courageous and so is all their offspring (which cannot be said to hold true of us humans), all cattle are temperate, all storks just, all cranes clever. Virtues of character mainly belong to ourselves and to such of the other animals as have a more highly developed imagination that is amenable to habituation (Aristotle calls it 'teachable'). As for rational virtues, they either (3) deal with tripartite soul and moderation of the passions (civic (*politikai*) virtues), or they do not, in which case they either (4) flee from passions (purificatory virtues), or (5) *have* fled (contemplative (*theôrêtikai*) virtues). Plotinus [1.2 [19] 7 (2-6)] holds that there is another degree of virtues, that of the ideal paradigms. There are, indeed, also paradigmatic virtues; for just as our eye, when illuminated by the sunlight, is at first different from the source of the light, as its recipient, but is afterwards somehow united with it and joined to it, and becomes as it were one with it and 'sun-like', so our soul is at first illuminated by intelligence and its actions are directed by the contemplative virtues, but afterwards it becomes in a way identical with the source of the illumination and acts in union with the One by the paradigmatic virtues. The object of philosophy is to make us intellect, that

of theurgy to unite us with the intelligible principles and conform our activity to the paradigms. LGW

(13) Marinus *Life of Proclus* chs 2-3, lines 45-55 Masullo (= ch. 3, p. 3 Saffrey-Segonds-Luna)

First then, categorising the virtues into natural (*phusikai*), virtues of character (*êthikai*) and civic, and then those above these, the purificatory and contemplative (*theôrêtikai*) and those so-called theurgic (to say nothing of those yet higher than these which are above (*huper*) the capacity of man) we will commence with the more natural (*phusikôterai*) ones. Whatsoever virtues are by nature present in those who have inherited them from their ancestors, were from the time of his birth all innate in this blessed man whom we praise. And the traces (*ikhnê*) of these virtues shone forth brightly even in his lowest, oyster-like (*ostreôdês*) coating. MR

(14) Marinus *Life of Proclus* ch. 26, lines 62-6 Masullo (= ch. 26, p. 30 Saffrey-Luna)

He [Proclus] ran up to the virtues which are highest for the human soul, which the divinely possessed (*enthous*) Iamblichus marvellously (*huper-phuôs*) called 'theurgic' (*theourgikai*). RRKS

Same virtues in the two sexes:

(15) Proclus *in Remp.* 1.253,1-26

This having been well established, one should also mention the views which the great Theodore [of Asine] contributed. First, he asked whether one should attribute no virtue whatsoever to women, or some virtue; and if the latter, whether it is the same virtue as men have or, as they [the Peripatetics] say, a different one – bravery in the case of men, temperance in the case of women. Now if we attribute no virtue to women, then we will create a city that is stunted, consisting of an equal number of the virtuous and vicious. Those who are born from this population will in similar proportion be by nature well-suited and ill-suited to education. If women have some virtue, then in turn each of the sexes will be stunted and half-complete, since the virtue which each has will not be complete either. For if it were complete, the other virtues would have been co-implicated, as the Peripatetics themselves say that the complete virtues co-implicate one another. But if we give all the virtues to each of the sexes, then we have what we are looking for.

Secondly, Theodorus argues from the facts themselves: the differences between the sexes are clearly due to differences in the way states are run, in that male and female accomplish the same feats. For the Amazons are courageous, and the Sauromatides too as much as the Thracians, and

among the Lusitanians, so they say, the women run the army and the state and do everything that Greek men do, whereas the men weave and spin and do everything that Greek women do. If this is agreed, then we should think that there is no difference between male and female as far as the acquisition of virtue is concerned, and we should not define them by reference to their customs but by reference to their natures, which their adoption of the same pursuits shows to be the same, albeit that these pursuits differ from one place to another. RW

Reading

I. Hadot, *Le problème du Néoplatonisme Alexandrin*, Paris 1978, 160ff.
L.G. Westerink, note to *The Greek Commentators on Plato's Phaedo*, vol. 1, Olympiodorus, Lecture 8, §2-3.

17(b) Does virtue admit of latitude and degrees?

In commenting on Aristotle's idea (*Cat.* 10b26-11a15; *Sens.* 6, 445b28-31; 446a16-20) that some qualities admit of degrees, the commentators worked out the idea of latitude (*platos*) allowing of intensification and relaxation, discussed more fully under **Physics 21**. Aspasius applies the idea to virtues and asks which virtues admit of latitude and which do not. The Stoics had sometimes treated virtue and vice as all-or-nothing affairs, admitting of no latitude, Porphyry *in Cat.* 137,29-138,4; Simplicius *in Cat.* 284,32-285,1. (See also texts collected in A.A. Long and D.N. Sedley, *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, 60O; 61I, J, N, T, U.) Aristotle might seem to agree with them about virtue, though not about vice, when he distinguishes virtue and vice, saying, *EN* 2.6, 1106b28-33, that there is only one way of hitting the mark and being virtuous, but many ways of missing it and being vicious. However, that does not mean that vice admits a range of degrees, any more than virtue does, 1107a18-27, for vice, being an excess, there cannot be an excess or deficiency of it. Aspasius modifies the last point, saying that vices may admit of degrees in relation to each other, but not to the mean.

But despite his remarks on virtue, Aristotle talks freely of people being more courageous or more liberal, *EN* 3.8, 1117a18; 4.1, 1120b9-11. Aspasius, though an Aristotelian, agrees with the Stoics that virtue does not admit degrees, so takes Aristotle to be describing as *less* virtuous, those who are not really virtuous at all. He rejects an alternative interpretation, that degrees for Aristotle are applicable to virtues that are imperfect in the sense that they are not in every respect rightly exercised. Simplicius wonders if degrees are applicable to virtues that are imperfect in the sense that they are not produced by all three of nature, habit and teaching. But he is constrained by the fact that he is here discussing the non-Aristotelian view that what is imperfect is not the virtue, but the degree of participation in the virtue. Others may well have appealed to imperfect virtues to defend Aristotle's use of comparatives.

Alexander invokes the notion of latitude to show that the wise man's actions are not determined, since he has latitude as to the form his wise actions will take.

(1) Aristotle *EN* 2.6, 1106b28-33

Again going wrong (*hamartanein*) occurs in many ways (for evil belongs to the unlimited, as the Pythagoreans depicted [it] (*eikazein*), while good

belongs to the limited); but getting it right (*katorthoun*) [occurs] in one way. And so the one is easier and the other difficult – missing the mark is easier, but hitting it is difficult. ARL

(2) Aspasius *in EN* 50,19-51,4

Or rather: excess and deficiency in vices are spoken of in two ways: one within the vice itself, so that one exceeds more than another and another is deficient more than another; but excess and deficiency are [also] spoken of in a different way in relation to the mean and to virtue. So, in terms of the first of those that have been mentioned, it is possible for one vice to be exceeded by another and to be intensified more or slackened [more] (*epiteinesthai, aniesthai*); but if one considers [it] in relation to the mean, excess is not partly excess and partly deficiency. 'For in this way there will be,' he says, some mean and virtue in vice itself; and this is impossible. Well, according to this argument there will not be excess of excess or deficiency of deficiency, so that there may not be means in evils. Moreover, this is clear also from the virtues; for just as with self-control and courage and with virtue as a whole, which is a mean, there is not an excess and deficiency and mean in the mean itself, 'because the mean is an extreme [cf. 2.6, 1107a23; *DA* 2.11, 424a6-7]' in respect of virtue and has been determined, if this is 'so, nor is there a mean or excess and deficiency' of the vices, 'but however the actions' in accordance with the vice 'are performed, they are in error [*EN* 2.6, 1107a24-5]', and of what is on either side of virtue one part is entirely excess and the other deficiency. If this is so, it is not surprising that the actions mentioned, adultery and theft, do not have a mean, but the whole action is evil, and similarly the afore-mentioned emotions, however they occur, are in error, [namely] jealousy, *Schadenfreude* (*epikhairekakia*), shamelessness. RWS

(3) Aspasius *in EN* 99,29-100,4

And similarly, nothing prevents the man who has less and gives more from being prodigal with regard to his property, and not liberal, whereas the man who gives less is liberal. In what sense did he say that the man who gives less is more liberal [*EN* 4.1, 1120b9-11]? Is it because the one is less and the other is more liberal? But if the one transgresses and does not give in accordance with his property, nor observe the right amount to give away, he is not a liberal man. So is there such a thing as remission and intensification (*anesis, epitasis*) in the case of the imperfect virtues? Let the argument be about liberality. What, for example, if someone gets everything precisely right by giving to the right people, at the right time, for the sake of the noble, and all the other things, except that he is deficient in respect of quantity? Rather it is not the case that he said 'more liberal' in this sense but he is in the habit of often describing things a certain way comparatively, when the one man is, but the other altogether is not; for

example, calling the man who is deliberative 'more intelligent', and the man who is not 'less intelligent', when the one is intelligent, and the other is not. KI

(4) Simplicius *in Cat.* 287,13-24

So perhaps in the light of this consideration the doctrine which Aristotle alludes to, which allows perfect states in the case of health, literacy and other conditions, and not only in that of virtue, says that they themselves are not capable of intensification or relaxation, considering that intensity or relaxation is to be found in the things that to greater or lesser degree partake in the states. But this can be seen not only in the arts themselves, but also in the virtues; for some of the virtues are perfect, others imperfect; the latter are those which are which are produced by only one of nature, habit or teaching, while the former are those which have been brought to perfection by these three things – except, of course, that virtue itself is perfect and complete, and is participated in a partial way like literacy and all the other arts; so the imperfect, the greater and the less are to be considered as belonging to participation. BF

(5) Alexander *On Fate* 29, 199,30-200,2

For however reasonable it is that the wise person (*phronimos*) should perform activities in accordance with reason and wisdom, first it is not in a definite way or being carried out up to this particular point that these activities are rational and wise, but everything that happens in this way has a latitude (*platos*), and small variations in these matters do not frustrate the objective. RRKS

Reading

Katerina Ierodiakonou, 'Aspasius on perfect and imperfect virtues', in Antonina Alberti, Robert W. Sharples, eds, *Aspasius: The Earliest Extant Commentary on Aristotle's Ethics*, Berlin 1999, ch. 6, 142-75.

17(c) Goals of conduct in virtue and art

Plato, *Rep.* 2, 357C-358A offers to show that justice is loved both for its own sake and for its consequences. Aristotle explicates this by pointing out that we *would* still pursue such things, even if they *were* bereft of the consequences, EN 1.6, 1096b16-19.

Alexander(?) discusses whether justice and other virtues are valuable because of what they do for the community, rather than in themselves. He answers that if justice actually *consists* in equalising relations in the community, there will be no contrast between valuing it for itself and for its effect in the community.

(1) Alexander(?) *Ethical Problems* 24, 146,23-5; 147,16-24

We also choose justice, because it preserves the community which is

natural for us if we are by nature [inclined to live] in a community and a city-state. ...

These things being so, if the preservation of political and of economic community (*koinônia*) are not worthy to be chosen by men on their own account, but on account of something else, [then] justice too, which is the mean-point in the things on which the preservation of the aforementioned things depends, will not be worthy to be chosen on its own account either, according to those for whom this is what justice is. But if community and its preservation are worthy to be chosen by people on their own account, justice too will be shown to be worthy to be chosen on its own account, in that it is a mean-point and an equality of what is equal both in distributions and in contracts, on which the preservation of the primary, political community depends. RWS

Alexander's Stoic opponents were alive to the fact that in exercising e.g. justice, one is aiming (*stokhazesthai*) at an appropriate distribution of perquisites. Why? For the Stoics would consider such things ultimately 'indifferent'. At least from Antipater (head of School *c.* 152 – *c.*129 AD) onwards, the Stoics would answer that the appropriate distribution of perquisites would be merely the just person's target, but that their goal (*telos*, Latin *ultimum*) was not to hit the target, but rather to do everything they could (*par'hauton*) to hit it, in other words to aim well, Cicero *Fin.* 3,22 (*SVF* 3.18), Plutarch *Comm. Not.* 1071B-C.

Alexander was sufficiently influenced, Ierodiakonou has shown, by this distinction to apply an analogous one to stochastic arts like medicine. The goal (*telos*) of medicine is, admittedly, to cure. But this cannot always be achieved, and the job (*ergon*) of medicine is more modest, namely to do everything possible (*par'autas, endekhomenon*) that conforms with the art to effect a cure. See further **Logic and Metaphysics 8(d)**.

(2) Alexander *in Top.* 32,26-34,5

The same applies to medicine, the pilot's art and all other stochastic arts: the doctor's job (*ergon*) is to do all that can (*endekhomena*) be done towards saving the patient, not to save him. If one said the latter was his job, then non-doctors will be doctors and the doctor will not be one, since lay persons often save sick people by administering things to them with a happy hand, whereas doctors often fail to save them, when their ailment is too bad for medical aid or is not easily subjected to diagnosis; and just so with the pilot's art. The same account applies to rhetoric and dialectic, since often the want of an attack argument, whether for syllogising the point at issue or for convincing the audience, is due to the nature of the problem, not to the dialectician or the orator. For with arts of this kind our estimate (*krisis*) is not based upon the goals (*telê*) achieved by them, as it is with house-building, weaving and other productive arts. In all these the activity proceeds according to definite, ordered ways, and their job could never be realised by chance (*apo tukhês*); here the goal (*telos*) is the job set before us (*to prokeimenon ergon*), by the fact that the completed job follows upon the things done for the sake of it, so that it becomes a sign that the things which

precede it have been done correctly, according to the rules of the art. By contrast, in the stochastic arts the desired result (*ta hôn kharin*) does not always follow upon the prescriptions of the art being carried out. The explanation is that in these arts some effects come about by chance: their results are not brought about by definite procedures. This is why what is achieved by arts of this kind is not their goal, as it is in those arts in which a thing is brought about by definite procedures and could not come about without these: for here the job done is at once the goal and, as I have said, a sign that everything has been done according to the art, since the job could not have come about in any other way.

[33,24] Or the job in all arts is the activity which, in accordance with the disposition and art, effects the appropriate objects through the appropriate instruments; but the goal in those arts which require matter of a certain description and not just any, is not the completed job alone, but that which, with the job, comprises the following features too. For the doctor's job is to do everything that can be done in accordance with the art towards saving the patient, but his goal, for which he does the other things, is to save him, and that requires other factors besides what is done in accordance with the art of medicine. For with fully determined procedures, achieving the goal is up to the agent (*ep'autois*), just as it is to act in accordance with the art, but in the stochastic arts the goal is not up to the practitioners, any more than being happy is up to the virtuous – except insofar as being good and noble is already a part of being happy. JMvO

(3) Alexander(?) *Quaest.* 2.16, 61,23-8

Or in the case of these arts too their goal (*telos*) is to achieve that for the sake of which they do everything that depends on them (*par'autas*), [and to do so] *through* doing everything that depends on them, but their own proper job is to do everything that depends on them towards achieving the objective set before them (*to prokeimenon*). For this alone is not sufficient for achieving their objective, but they also need certain other things, which are not up to (*epi*) the art. RWS

Reading

Katerina Ierodiakonou, 'Alexander of Aphrodisias on medicine as a stochastic art', in P. van der Eijk, ed., *Ancient Medicine in its Socio-cultural Context*, Amsterdam and Atlanta 1995, 473-85.

Arthur Madigan, 'Alexander of Aphrodisias: the book of ethical problems', *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* 2.36.2, 1260-79.

R.W. Sharples, *Alexander of Aphrodisias: Ethical Problems*, in the series *Ancient Commentators on Aristotle*, London & Ithaca, NY 1990, notes *ad. loc.*

17(d) Sin

See under **3(e)** above for the question whether Plotinus' undescended soul is compatible with sin and unhappiness, and under **14(b)** above for the role of

proairesis in sin. Plotinus' eventual view that it is the lower soul mixed with body that sins, at 1.1 [53] 12 (1-24), is translated under **3(e)**, and reading is suggested there.

17(e) Happy life as non-temporal

Since the happy life is non-temporal, it requires no prolongation.

(1) Plotinus 1.4 [46] 13 (5-12), translated under **3(e)** above

(2) Plotinus 1.5 [36] 7 (1-30)

But if we have to consider only the present and not reckon in the past, why do we not do the same in the case of time, and why do we add past time to present time and say that the total is increased? So why should we not claim that happiness is commensurate with the time it lasts? We would then be dividing happiness according to the divisions of time. In fact if we measure it by the present we shall be making it indivisible.

[8] The answer is that there is nothing absurd in counting time which no longer exists, since we would tot up the number of things that have been but are no more, like the dead. But it is absurd to claim that past happiness, which is over and done with, is greater than present happiness. For happiness needs to have persisted, while time over and above present time cannot exist. In general the passage of time scatters to the winds every present moment. That is why it is right to call it 'the image of eternity', since it wishes to banish the permanence of eternity in scattering itself to the winds. So if it removes from eternity its would-be permanence and appropriates it, it destroys it; it does preserve it for a while and in a way because of its eternality, but destroys it if it becomes totally enveloped.

[20] So if happiness depends on a morally good life, obviously it must depend on the life of real Being, which is the noblest. This is not to be measured by time but by eternity. It is neither more nor less, nor of any length, but is a timeless present, unextended and outside time. So we must not associate Being with non-Being, or time or the everlasting with eternity; nor must we extend what cannot be extended, but it must be taken as a totality (if you 'take' it at all), taking not the indivisibility of time but the life of eternity, which does not consist of many moments of time but is all together beyond the reach of time. BF

17(f) Happy life not dependent on external circumstances

Plotinus devotes 1.4 [46] to agreeing with the Stoics against the Aristotelians that the happy life is independent of fortune and circumstance. But he objects that the Stoics fail to prove this truth, partly because they do after all attach a certain importance to indifferent things, and partly because they fail to divide the soul, so as to distinguish a part of it exempt from suffering.

Plotinus' successors, however, while accepting his conclusion, thought he went too far in ascribing to us a soul undescended from the intelligible world and thus

exempt from suffering. The question for Plotinus is why anyone is unhappy. For quotations see **3(e)** and **13(d)** above.

17(g) Suicide and martyrdom

The standard term for suicide was *exairein heauton* (taking oneself out). Since Plato's description of philosophy in the *Phaedo* 64A as practising death was viewed by Cleombrotus as an injunction to suicide, that subject is discussed in the commentators' introductions to the curriculum, in connexion with the definition of philosophy. Plato makes Socrates forbid killing oneself at *Phaedo* 61D-62C, except in a case like that of Socrates forced to drink hemlock. Plato punishes suicide too lightly undertaken by burial with ignominy at *Laws* 873C-D, though *Laws* 854A-C thinks it may be the better course for the incurably wicked.

Plotinus deterred Porphyry from suicide and writes a little note against it, while seeming to recognise as possible justifications insanity and being taken prisoner. The Stoics Seneca (*Letter* 24.25) and Epictetus (*Discourses* 1.9.11) also feel they must oppose the desire to depart for a heavenly life. But the Stoics nonetheless admired the suicide of Cato. They are recorded by Olympiodorus below as having allowed suicide in five specified circumstances, and they treated death as anyhow indifferent (*adiaphoron*). Olympiodorus points out that Plato allows exceptions, *Lecture on Phaedo* 1.8, lines 3-16, although the *Republic* passage he cites is really about a doctor's not resuscitating the incurable. But Porphyry is against suicide and Macrobius, the fifth century expositor of Neoplatonism in Latin, seems to follow Porphyry's lost *On the Return of the Soul*, in which Plotinus' personal dissuasion may have been described. As regards Macrobius' reference to the ratio of numbers linking soul to body, see for earlier development of this idea, A.A. Long, 'The harmonics of Stoic virtue', in H.J. Blumenthal and Howard Robinson, eds, *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, suppl. vol. 1991, *Aristotle and the Later Tradition*, 97-116.

Among the Christians, Augustine in *City of God* Book 1 forbids suicide in any circumstances whatever, even rape (1.16-19), which was a topical subject at the time of the sack of Rome and exacerbated by Roman admiration for Lucretia, who committed suicide after rape. Augustine forbids suicide in these cases too, on the grounds that in the absence of will (*voluntas*) and consent of mind (*consentire, consensio, consensus*) there was no adultery on the part of the victim. But he has a problem because (1.26) some women who had drowned themselves at a time of persecution, to avoid rape, were revered by the Church as martyrs. The distinction between suicide and voluntary martyrdom has been a problem in both Christianity and Islam. Augustine thinks the self-drowning would be all right, if they had a genuine, not an illusory, command from God. But his was not the only view. His mentor Ambrose, for example, praises St. Pelagia for a similar act. However, in 1.20 Augustine relies on the Ten Commandments and so has to struggle with the question how far the commandment 'thou shalt not kill' extends: To bushes? To animals? To rule out animals, while maintaining the ban on suicide, he has to appeal to the Stoic idea that justice is owed only to those who are allied with us by possessing reason. Stoicism here provides decisive support for Christian acceptance of meat-eating. See further **17(h)** below, and Richard Sorabji, *Animal Minds and Human Morals*, London & Ithaca, NY 1993, ch. 14.

In *On Free Choice of the Will*, Augustine takes a different tack and argues that one cannot want one's own non-existence.

The Christian condemnation of suicide increasingly prevailed in the sixth century, so that while Olympiodorus, a pagan, can still defend suicide in special

cases, the Christian David forbids it. And while Olympiodorus infers the occasional justifiability of suicide from Plato and Plotinus, the others report only the objections of these two predecessors.

The Neoplatonists:

(1) Plotinus 1.9 [16] (1-19)

'You will not force [your soul] out, so that it does not leave, for in departing, it will take some baggage with it in order to ensure its departure.' A departure is a move to another place. Rather the soul waits for the body to be entirely separated from it, when it has no need of a change of place but is entirely outside the body. How then is the body separated? When nothing in the soul is still bound to it; the body can no longer constrain it, since it has lost the attunement (*harmonia*) whose possession meant possession of the soul.

What then if a man deliberately breaks the bond of the body? Well, in that case it is the man himself who has done the violence and separated himself; it is not the body that has released the soul. And when he is breaking the bond he is not unaffected (*apathês*), but is affected by anger, pain or passion and should not be doing anything at all.

What then if he feels the onset of insanity? Well, the virtuous man is hardly likely to; but if it were to happen, then it should be considered as something inevitable, to be chosen not for its own sake but as a result of circumstances (*ek peristaseôs*). For the use of drugs to release the soul is not perhaps conducive to its welfare. If each man's allotted span is determined by Fate, then it is unpropitious to cut it short, except when it is inevitable. If you are to enjoy the same status in the next world as the one you have at the moment of departure from this, then as long as there is any chance of progress (*prokoptein*), you should not force your soul out. BF

(2) Plotinus 1.4 [46] 7 (31-3)

If you are taken prisoner 'you have an escape route', even if not to happiness. BF

(3) Porphyry *Abstinence* 1.38.2

Now the philosopher will not take himself out by violence, for by doing violence to himself he remains none the less in the place from which he is forcing himself away. But he will not think he is doing something that makes no difference (*adiaphoron*) when it thickens his chain. So, giving to nature only what is necessary, and that light and provided by the lightest foods, he will refuse everything else as tending to pleasure. GC

(4) Macrobius *in Somn. Scip.* 1.13

[1] Scipio, through his dream, was inspirited both by heaven, which is the reward of the blessed, and by the promise of immortality. This great and glorious hope was more and more strongly confirmed by the sight of his father, whom he had asked whether he was alive, being, apparently, uncertain as yet.

[2] So he began to prefer death in order to live. He was not content with having wept at the sight of the parent whom he had believed dead, but as soon as he could speak, he wanted first of all to show that he desired nothing more than to remain thereafter with him; but he did not decide to do what he wanted before taking advice. The first reaction shows his wisdom, the second his sense of duty. Now let us consider the actual words of his question and the advice he received.

[3] 'Tell me, most reverend and best of fathers, if this is life, as I hear Africanus say, why do I linger on earth? Why not hasten here to you?' 'No,' said his father, 'for until the God whose sanctuary is everything you see has freed you from this prison of the body, the way here is not open to you.

[4] People were born to look after that sphere called earth which you see in the middle of this sanctuary. They were given a soul (*animus*) from those everlasting fires you call stars and planets (*sidera et stellas*), the solid spheres which, animated by divine minds, achieve with amazing speed their circuits and orbits. So, Publius, you and all dutiful people must keep the soul in the prison of the body, and must not leave this human life without the command of him who gave you that soul, in case you seem to have deserted from the task assigned to you.'

[5] This is the doctrine and precept of Plato, who in the *Phaedo* [61C] lays down that a human being must not die by his own choice; but in the same dialogue Plato says that students of philosophy should seek death, and that philosophy itself is the practice of dying. This seems contradictory, but it is not. Plato recognised two human deaths. I am not now repeating what was said above, that there are two deaths, one of the soul, the other of the living creature (*animal*). Plato claims that there are also two deaths of the living creature, that is the human being: nature provides one, the virtues provide the other.

[6] A human being dies when the soul leaves the body which has been released by the law of nature, but it is also called 'dying' when a soul still in the body is taught by philosophy to despise bodily temptations and to evade the sweet snares of desire (*cupiditates*) and all the other emotions. This is what we earlier showed to result from the second rank of virtues [the purificatory], those which are suited only to philosophers.

[7] This, then, is the death that Plato says wise men must seek, but he forbids us to force or to inflict or to hasten the death which nature has ordained for all. He teaches us that we must wait on nature, and he explains the reasons for this requirement by borrowing from things in everyday use.

[8] He says that those who are sent to jail by order of those in power ought not to escape before the power which imprisoned them has allowed them to leave. Punishment, he says, is not avoided by furtive departure: it is increased. He adds that we are subject to the gods, by whose guardianship and providence we are governed. Now none of the master's possessions must be taken without his consent from the place where he has put his belongings. Just as charges will be brought against someone who takes the life of another person's slave, so someone who tries to end his own life, though his master has not yet told him to, will achieve not release but condemnation.

[9] Plotinus explores in greater depth these Platonic principles. The soul, he says, should after leaving the human being be found free from corporeal emotions. But someone who violently expels it from the body does not allow it to be free. For someone who inflicts death on himself by his own choice is either sick of constraint, or has descended to this act through fear of something or hatred of something, and all these are counted as emotions. So even if the soul was previously pure from these stains, it is stained by the very fact of its forcible departure. Moreover, he says, death should be the release of the soul from the body, not a fetter; but a forced departure binds the soul ever more closely to the body.

[10] Indeed, this is why souls expelled like this wander for a long time near the body or its tomb or the place where violence was done; whereas the souls which in this life release themselves from the fetters of the body by the philosophic death attain the sky and the stars while their bodies still live. For this reason the only voluntary death he shows to be praiseworthy is that which is acquired, as we have said, by the method of philosophy, not by the sword; by wisdom, not by poison.

[11] He adds that the only natural death is that in which the body leaves the soul, not the soul the body. It is well known that a fixed and established ratio of numbers links souls to bodies. While these numbers last, the body continues to be animated; but when they fail, that hidden force which made the link dissolves, and this is what we call fate and the fated time of life.

[12] So the soul itself does not fail, for it is immortal and everlasting, but the body wears out when the numbers are complete. The soul is not tired by animating, but the body leaves its post when it can no longer be animated. Hence the saying of the most learned diviner: 'I shall complete my number and be returned to the darkness' [Virgil *Aeneid* 6.543].

[13] This, then, is the true natural death, when only the failing of its numbers brings an end to the body: not when life is expelled from a body still fit to sustain continuance. The difference is not slight between dissolving life by nature and dissolving it by choice (*sponte*).

[14] For when the soul is deserted by the body, it can retain nothing bodily in itself, if it has practised purity when in this life; but if the soul has itself been violently expelled from the body, because the bond was broken not released, that very compulsion becomes an occasion for emotion, and it is affected by the evils of the bond even as it breaks the bond.

[15] He adds to the foregoing this further reason for not dying by choice. It is well known, he says, that in that other world souls will be rewarded according to the perfection each has attained in this life. So the end of this life should not be hastened when there can still be further progress.

[16] And this is true, for in esoteric discussions on the return of the soul, it is said that those who are at fault in this life are like people who fall on level ground, and can get up without difficulty, but souls which leave this life with the defilement of sins are like those who have fallen headlong from a high precipice, where there is no possibility of rising again. For this reason, then, we must use the time of life which is given to us to have a greater opportunity of complete purification.

[17] Then, you will say, someone who is completely purified should kill himself, because he has no reason to remain: obviously, one who has reached the heavens is not trying to go further. But by the very act of summoning a swift end in the hope of enjoying blessedness, he is caught in the snare of emotion, because hope is an emotion just as fear is; instead, he incurs the other penalties discussed above.

[18] That is why Paulus forbade and turned back the son who was hurrying to come to him in hope of a more real life, lest his haste for release and his longing for ascent should rather fetter him with that same passion and delay him. He does not say 'you cannot die unless natural death has come', but he says 'you cannot come here'.

[19] 'Until God' he says 'has freed you from the prison of the body, the way here is not open to you', because, having already been received into heaven he knows that the way to a heavenly habitation is open only to complete purity. The same constancy is to be shown in not fearing death which comes naturally and in not forcing death to come in violation of the natural order.

[20] These statements we have reported from Plato and Plotinus on suicide will ensure that no obscurity remains in the words of Cicero which forbid it. GC

Augustine:

(5) Augustine *City of God* 1.20 Dombart and Kalb *CCL* 47, lines 18-41

If that is the case, then how much more must we understand that it is not allowed to kill oneself, since in what is written, 'Thou shalt not kill', with no further addition, no one is understood as exempt, and certainly not the one to whom the commandment is given.

Indeed some try on this basis to extend this commandment to domestic and wild animals, so that as a result it would not be permitted to kill any of them either. So why not include plants, herbs, and whatever is planted in soil and feeds through roots? For this kind of thing, too, even though it has no sense perception, is said to have life and can therefore die, which means it can be killed by the use of force; and even the Apostle [Paul] says,

when he speaks of plant seeds: 'What you sow will not live, unless it dies' [I Cor. 15,36]; and in Psalms it is written: 'He killed their vines with hail' [Ps. 78,47]. Does this mean we subscribe most foolishly to the error of the Manichaeans and hold, when we hear 'Thou shalt not kill!' that it is wrong to pull up a shrub? If, then, this madness is removed when we read 'Thou shalt not kill', we do not on that account understand this saying of plants, because they lack sense perception; and not of irrational animals, whether they be of the flying, swimming, running or creeping kind, because they are not allied (*sociari*) with us by any rationality. It was not bestowed upon them to share it with us; and because of this perfectly just arrangement decreed by our Creator their life and death is subject to our use. It remains that we have to understand the sentence 'Thou shalt not kill!' as referring to humans, meaning therefore neither your neighbour nor yourself. For even someone who kills himself kills none other than a human. JL

(6) Augustine *City of God* 1.19, Dombart and Kalb *CCL* 47, lines 63-9

But to refute those who, divorced from any sense of chastity, insult Christian women who were compelled in captivity, the words spoken in the conspicuous eulogy in the very noble case of this woman [Lucretia] suffice for us: 'There were two people and one committed adultery.' For Lucretia was rather believed by them to be such that she could not have polluted herself by any consent (*consensus*) to adultery. RRKS

(7) Augustine *City of God* 1.26 Dombart and Kalb *CCL* 47, lines 1-10

But, they say, some saintly women at the time of persecution, to avoid those attacking their chastity, hurled themselves in a river that would carry them away and kill them, and died in that way, and their tombs as martyrs (*martyria*) are venerated by throngs in the universal church.

I do not dare to make any rash judgement about this. I do not know whether a divine authority persuaded the church by some signs worthy of credence to honour their memory in this way. It may be so, for what if the women did this not through human error, but by divine command, out of obedience, not misconception. RRKS

(8) Augustine *Lib. Arb.* (*On Free Choice of the Will*) 3.8.22, 76-7; 3.8.23.82-4

See how absurd and inappropriate it is to say, 'I would rather not exist than be miserable.' For someone who says, 'I would rather this than that', chooses something. But not existing, is nothing, not something, so in no way can you rightly choose it, when what you would choose does not exist. You say you do in fact want to exist, even though you are miserable, but that you ought not to have wanted this. What, then, ought you to have wanted? 'Rather not to exist', you say. If you ought to have wanted this, it

is something better. But what does not exist cannot be better. So it is not what you ought to have wanted and your feeling (*sensus*) that it is not what you want is truer than your opinion that you ought to have wanted it.

Then when someone has attained what he rightly chooses to seek, necessarily he becomes better. But the person who is not going to exist cannot be better. So no one can rightly choose not to exist. ...

So when someone believes that he will not exist after death, but is driven by intolerable troubles to a total craving for death and decides on death and seizes it, in his opinion he embraces an error which is defective in every way, but in his feeling he embraces a natural desire for rest. What is restful is not nothing, but rather is more something than what is unrestful. For unrestfulness changes our emotions, so that one destroys another, whereas restfulness possesses constancy in which the 'Exists' which is being said is most understood. So all that striving in the desire for death is intent not on the non-existence of the one who dies, but on his resting. So however much he erroneously believes that he will not exist, his nature still desires to be at rest, that is, to exist more. So just as it can in no way come about that anyone should be pleased at non-existence, so it ought not in any way to come about that anyone is ungrateful about the fact of his existence to the goodness of the Creator. RRKS

Olympiodorus, with report of the Stoics:

(9) Olympiodorus *Lecture 1 on Phaedo* §2, lines 1-20 Westerink

Before turning to the text, however, let us show by arguments of our own this very point, that suicide is not permissible. If God has two kinds of powers, elevative and providential, and if those by which he extends his providential care to secondary beings do not impede his powers of elevation and conversion upon himself, but he exercises both simultaneously, then there is no reason why the philosopher as God's imitator (philosophy being assimilation to God) should not be active creatively and providentially, while at the same time leading a life of purification. For when one is separated from the body after death, detachment is not difficult to achieve, but as long as we are imprisoned in the body, to pursue purification is a noble thing.

[11] Second argument: in the same way as the Deity is always present to all, and the degree in which each participates in it depends on its own fitness or unfitness, so the soul should be present to the body and not withdraw herself from it, and it will depend on the fitness or unfitness of the body whether it shares in the soul's life or not. Thus Plato in the *Theaetetus* [173C6-174A2] represents the perfect philosopher as not even knowing what kind of man he is himself, and moreover as ignorant of the fact that he does not know this, though he lives in the body.

[17] Third argument: the voluntary shackle should be unfastened voluntarily, the involuntary shackle involuntarily, and not conversely. That is to

say, from natural life, which is involuntary, we should be released in the involuntary way by natural death, while from the life of emotion (*met' empatheias*), which we have chosen of our own free will, we should release ourselves in the voluntary way by purification. LGW

(10) Olympiodorus *Lecture 1 on Phaedo* §§7-9 Westerink

[1.7] This is the mythical argument. The dialectical and philosophical is as follows: if it is the Gods who are our guardians and whose possessions we are, we should not put an end to our own lives, but leave it to them. If only one of the two were true, and either we were possessions of the Gods, but they did not take care of us, or conversely, there would be at least a reasonable ground for suicide; as it is, both reasons together forbid us to cast off the shackle.

[1.8] Why should we not also make a case for the contrary view and show that suicide is permissible? (i) In the very passage under discussion, in which Plato argues that we should not dispose of our own lives, he hints at the contrary possibility too, first by saying [*Phaedo* 61C9] 'He will not, perhaps, do violence to himself', the 'perhaps' suggesting that there are circumstances in which one should; next by adding that one should not take one's own life [62C7-8], 'unless God brings a strong necessity upon us, such as has now come upon me'. (ii) Plato himself in so many words permits suicide to the wise man, to a middle group, and to the common, worthless man. To the wise man, as in the present passage; to the middle group, as in the *Republic* [407D-E], where he says that a man who suffers from a long and incurable disease ought to end his life because he is of no use to the state, for Plato wants his citizens to live for the good of the community and not for their own; in the *Laws* [854A-C] to the masses, where he says that a man in the grip of incurable passions, for instance an inclination to incest or sacrilege or a similar thing, if he is unable to restrain himself, should commit suicide. (iii) Plotinus has written about 'justified suicide'; consequently it is sometimes right to take one's own life. (iv) According to the Stoics there are five cases in which suicide is justified. They compared life to a party and said that all the reasons for breaking up a party hold good also for ending one's life. A party, then, may be broken up because of a weighty obligation that suddenly presents itself, e.g. the unexpected arrival of a friend, or because of intruders who use foul language, or because of beginning drunkenness; or again it may be broken up because the food is spoiled, or finally because provisions have run out. So life, too, may be cut short in five cases: (1) as a party may be broken up because of an obligation, so may life, as in the example of Menoeceus [Euripides *Phoenissae* 1009-14], when he sacrificed himself for his country; (2) because of foul language: thus we should end our life, if a tyrant tries to force us to betray secrets, as a Pythagorean woman did when pressed to reveal why she did not eat beans: she said 'I would sooner eat them than tell', then, when they tried to make her eat them, she said 'I would rather tell than eat them',

and she ended by biting off her tongue, as the organ both of speech and of taste; (3) a party may be broken up also because of drunkenness, and by analogy one may end one's life because of the senility that results from the condition of the body; senility, in fact, is a kind of drunkenness induced by nature; (4) another reason is spoiling of the food, and thus a man may end his life because his body is troubled by incurable diseases and unfit to minister to the soul; (5) lastly, a party is broken up because supplies have run out, and so suicide is permissible in case of poverty, when there is no chance of support from the side of the good; for we should not accept it from the wicked, since the gifts of the unclean are themselves unclean, and we must not soil our hands with them.

[1.9] What is our own opinion, then, now that the argument has ended in contradictory conclusions? Of course, suicide can hardly be unlawful and justified at the same time. What we say is this: suicide is forbidden with a view to the body, which it harms, but it may be justified because of a greater good gained by the soul, for instance when the soul is hampered by the body. Anyone who has to make a decision chooses that which involves the lesser evil and the greater good: now just as it is perfidy not to help a friend when he is beaten, but if the one who beats him should happen to be one's own father, intervention is not justified, so here too suicide is forbidden for the sake of the body and justified in certain cases for the sake of the soul, because it may sometimes be beneficial to the soul. Thus far the survey. LGW

The late sixth-century commentators repeat the five Stoic grounds for suicide given by Olympiodorus, but with permutations, so that only Elias' version is entirely faithful to Olympiodorus. See David *Prolegomena* 32,11-34,12; Elias *Prolegomena* 14,15-16,8; pseudo-Elias *in Isag.* 13,1-17. What will be quoted next is not the permutations on the Stoic view, but their own borrowings from Platonism.

(11) David *Prolegomena* 34,1-12

It can be said that one cannot be required either justifiably or unjustifiably to commit suicide. For someone who does this sets himself in opposition to the Demiurge and threatens his sovereignty, wishing to dissolve that bond which he bound, I mean the separation of the soul from the body and one should be persuaded by the words of Plato [*Phaedo* 62B] that 'in life we are in a certain sort of prison and that we must not free ourselves from it or run away, but we should remain in bonds up to the time he breaks them.' For these circumstances which arise [i.e. when the Demiurge brings about a separation of soul from body] do not arise through someone committing suicide but through the soul being judged fit. For just as the best ship's captain is judged fit not in a calm sea but in a storm, in the same way the soul is judged by its behaviour in these circumstances. Likewise, the Peripatetics wishing to demonstrate patience of the soul, said 'O Zeus, give

us trying circumstances (*peristaseis*).' That, with God's help, is the lecture (*praxis*). MR

(12) Elias *Prolegomena* 15,23-16,8

Now Plotinus wrote a monograph on justified suicide and does not accept any of these five [Stoic] reasons [for suicide]. For he says that just as God, who does not cease having providential care for us – rather we make ourselves unsuited for life and suppose that God is far away from us – is equally present for all, so the pure make this manifest in their lives becoming self-evident companions of the divine. Likewise the sun provides light equally to all, but bats are unsuited to it, and fleeing the sun are not illuminated by it, but rather they consider it to be darkness although it is the fountain of light, so too is it necessary for the philosopher imitating both God and the sun not to neglect the body in any way through care for the soul and to exercise suitable foresight for it, until that time when becoming unfit, it separates itself from the relationship of association with the body. For it is absurd to kill oneself before one's allotted time, that is, before he who binds body and soul together releases that bond. For indeed the laws of the Romans forbid the delivery of bodies of those who kill themselves to the tomb before their feet are mutilated or until it is possible to say of them the words of the poet [i.e. Homer, *Iliad* 24.54] concerning the body of Hector: 'Raging, he maltreats the senseless earth.' And so much for that. MR

According to David above, the Peripatetics asked for trying circumstances (*peristaseis*) and trials. Trials and matyrdom (*martus*, literally a witness, *to marturion*, *marturein*), which in the pagan case was not necessarily lethal martyrdom, constituted a theme common to pagans and Christians. It is specially prominent in the Stoics of the first century AD, Seneca and Epictetus, as Paul Rabbow has brought out. Trials might be deliberately provoked (*provocare*), Seneca *Letter* 64,4, *On Providence* 2.9; 4.3. Epictetus seems to speak against this, *Discourses* 1.6.35, and the Neopythagorean Apollonius of Tyana, also of the first century, is represented as disparaging certain philosophers for provoking (*ekkalein*) death. The Christians had a corresponding problem as to how voluntary martyrdom, which was very common, differs from suicide (see Dodds, Nock, de Ste Croix). Not only does Marcus Aurelius at the end of the second century disparage Christians who sought death theatrically, out of a spirit of opposition, *Meditations* 11.3 but the Christian Clement of Alexandria, also of the second century, says that Christians who leap at death are suicides, not martyrs.

(13) Clement of Alexandria *Stromateis* 4.4.17.1, *GCS* ed. Stählin, vol. 2, p. 256

We censure those who leap at death. They are not our people, but share only the name, being eager through hatred against the Creator to hand themselves over, unhappily struggling for death. We say that they commit suicide (*exagein heautous*) and are not like martyrs (sc. witnesses *amar-*

turôs) even if they are punished in public. For they do not preserve the character of the faithful martyr, not knowing the true God, but give themselves over to an empty death, as do the Indians' naked sophists to a pointless fire. RRKS

Reading

John Cooper, 'Greek philosophers on euthanasia and suicide', in Baruch A. Brody, ed., *Suicide and Euthanasia*, Kluwer, Dordrecht 1989.
P. Courcelle, *Les Lettres Grecques en Occident*, Paris 1948, part 1, ch. 1, sec. 3, 25-7, translated as *Late Latin Writers and their Greek Sources*, Cambridge, MA 1969.
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A.D. Nock, *Conversion*, Oxford 1933, 197-202.
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L.G. Westerink, 'Elias and Plotinus', *Byz. Zeitschr.* 57, 1964, 26-32.
L.G. Westerink, notes ad Olympiodorum, as above.

17(h) Justice to animals

Porphyry in *On Abstinence from Animal Food* relates the arguments for sacrificing and eating animals (Book 1), and replies that an understanding of humans and gods shows such sacrifice inappropriate (Book 2, see under **18(a)** below), that a knowledge of non-Greek peoples shows it unnecessary (Book 4) and that an understanding of animals shows it unjust (Book 3). He feels constrained by the Stoic view that justice is owed to all rational beings because of our kinship (*oikeiôsis*), but to no others. So most of his effort in Book 3 goes into arguing that animals are rational (3.21.2 and 3.8.6 cited under **11(b)** above). But he also, borrowing perhaps from Plutarch, offers the earliest extant philosophical plea for justice to animals based on their feeling pain and terror. Sensitivity, not reason, is the true basis of kinship. This is surely a better rationale.

In the preceding section, **17(g)**, we saw that Augustine *City of God* 1.20 used the Stoic justification for killing animals, that they do not belong like us to the community of rational beings. This was a decisive step, since earlier Latin-writing Fathers such as Arnobius and his pupil Lactantius had not marked animals off sharply from humans as non-rational (Sorabji, *Animal Minds and Human Morals*, ch. 14).

For more on environmental ethics, see **11(g)** above.

(1) Porphyry *Abstinence* 3.19.2

The comparison of plants with animals is obviously forced. It is the nature of animals to have perceptions, to feel distress, to be afraid, to be hurt, and

therefore to be injured. Plants have no perceptions, so nothing is alien or bad to them, nothing is harm or injustice: for perception is the origin of all attachment (*oikeiôsis*) and alienation (*allotriôsis*), and the followers of Zeno make attachment the origin of justice. GC

Reading

Gillian Clark, *Porphyry: On Abstinence from Killing Animals*, in the series *Ancient Commentators on Aristotle*, London & Ithaca, NY 2000.
Richard Sorabji, *Animal Minds and Human Morals*, London & Ithaca, NY 1993.

17(i) Criticism of Communism in Plato's *Republic*

Proclus answers the criticisms by Aristotle in *Pol.* 2, 1260a36-1261b40, that Plato's arrangements in the *Republic* 461E-462D to have no private property or spouses represent a misconception about what gives the state unity. Proclus replies by insisting on the unity of a common goal, and also seeks to answer Aristotle's objection that there is a confusion in Plato's idea that everyone should call the same thing 'mine'.

Philoponus the Christian, in his attack on Proclus, *Contra Proclum* 319,15-331,2 Rabe, switches to criticising the proposals for the imposition of changes of sexual partner, eugenic infanticide and so on.

(1) Proclus *in Remp.* 2.360,4-368,17

In the second book of the *Politics*, that marvellous philosopher Aristotle examines Plato's *Republic*. This is in accordance with his usual practice of testing the views of his predecessors before putting forward his own. He assumes first, as a basis for the discussion of any constitution, an excellent postulate, founded on a process of logical division, namely that those who participate in a single constitution must, of necessity, either (a) have everything in common or (b) have nothing in common, or else (c) have some things in common but not others. Having nothing in common is not a possibility for people living in the same community. Having everything in common is likewise impracticable – they must treat as private at least their bodies, their various senses and their natural functions. If these alternatives are set aside, the only remaining possibility is that in a city people should have some things in common but not others.

[360,17] Aristotle takes this principle as his starting point. But Plato also said that it is not possible for everything to be common. He added, however, that in well-ordered cities it is preferable that as much as possible should be. He makes this clear firstly when he defines the requirement that each should follow one occupation for which he is naturally suited and that no one should assume an occupation or task that is altogether inappropriate for him. If this is correct, it will not be true that everyone shares in every occupation – only that those of the same nature have the same occupation. He makes the same point clear when he says that the city should be integrated with itself in the same way as the parts of a single

body. These also differ from each other and each has a separate function, for example seeing, hearing, moving, absorbing nourishment, but they all share the same feelings, live a single life and depend on a single soul. Each makes its own proper contribution to the whole and receives from the others what it needs for itself. For this reason when one part is in pain or is cured the whole man is said to be in pain or to be cured because what is good or bad for the part is good or bad for the whole.

[361,14] In the second place, having made this initial assumption, Aristotle commences his inquiry by asking how it is possible for the state to be one (supposing that that is the ideal). This idea, though adopted as a premise by Socrates, is, he claims, utterly absurd. For, to the extent that the city becomes more of a one, its nature as a city disappears. We say that the household is more of a one than the city and individual more of a one than the household. Thus even if it was possible to increase the unification of the city, it would not, it seems, be right to do so, for the city would then be destroyed. What is said to be the greatest good in political systems – that the city should, so far as possible, be one – would thus be utterly fatal to the city. If then the unification of the city is destructive of the city and if each thing's good tends to preserve and not destroy that of which it is the good, there is surely no alternative but to say that the unification of the city is not the city's good, since it turns it from a city into a single man.

[361,29] In reply to this criticism we must insist that the one is not what Aristotle took it to be. He took it as the indivisible and numerical one and assumed that Plato had reduced the city to that. But the one in this sense occupies the role of matter in relation to the city as a whole (for the city is composed of many men). In fact the one is superior to the parts and joins the many individuals together in such a way as to be greater than them and to be a final cause rather than a mere condition or material cause. It is the same with our bodies which are also made of many elements: each of the parts is a one but this one is such in the sense of being matter for the whole. The one in its proper sense holds the body together. It is either a single physical principle or else a soul which makes the body one, in spite of its being composed of many elements. Thus the one is twofold – it can be either material or final. When he [i.e. Socrates in the *Republic*] wants to unify the city he contrives its unification by way of reducing it, not to the material one, but rather to the final one which is the Good itself, through which and from which unification comes to everything. For this reason Socrates, as he is seeking the one in this sense – not, as we said, the indivisible but that which holds the city together – devises a system of sharing in as many things as possible. He sees this as creating harmony and minimising the city's proneness to internal dissension. Thus, when [Aristotle] says that the one destroys a city and that each thing's good preserves it, we can criticise the first of these claims on the grounds that it takes the one, not as that which unites the many and holds them together but as the material one. The one in this latter sense is a part and not a whole and thus genuinely does destroy multiplicity and wholeness. But the

one in the former sense in general preserves the whole by being a cause of fellow-feeling and unanimity.

[362,25] In the third place, he [Aristotle] says, that making the city too much of a unity destroys its self-sufficiency. A household is more self-sufficient than a single man, and a city than a household. Thus if what is less of a unity is more self-sufficient, as the city is when compared with the household and as the household is when compared with a single man, that which is more of a unity is less self-sufficient.

[363,1] The argument, like the previous one, is deceptive in that the criticism it makes depends on an equivocation in the sense of 'one'. A city is more self-sufficient and more of a one than a household and so is a household in comparison with a single man. It is also less self-sufficient and less of a one. If you are thinking of the indivisible and the sort of thing we said has the role of matter, then the city is indeed both less of a unity (for it needs many of whatever is such as to be indivisible) and less self-sufficient. This is because the city needs more for its existence and survival than does the single man, just as everything that is a whole needs more than does one of its parts. If on the other hand you are thinking of the sort of thing which is truly one (i.e. the one which is identical with the complete), then the city is more of a one than the single man and is more self-sufficient, just as the whole is both these things to a greater extent than its part. The whole is what holds things together while the part is what is held together by it and also more self-sufficient than what is included within it (for there is need of the other parts).

[363,15] Once again we may say that this argument, like the others, goes astray by picking out the unity that belongs to what is whole and complete and confusing it with the sense proper to what is partial and incomplete. And, like the previous argument, it also seems to separate unity and self-sufficiency from one another. Of course, one ought also to have listened to Socrates when he insisted in the *Phaedo* [99C] that he knew of nothing which could bind reality and hold it together like the god, which has more power in this respect than any Atlas and is what truly binds things together. He believed for these reasons that anything which is more self-sufficient than something else is also more unified and is more of a one to the extent that it is more self-sufficient. For that which participates more in what binds things together is more of a one, and that which participates more in the good also, according to the *Phaedo*, has a greater participation in that which has the power to bind things together. Whatever is more self-sufficient has a greater participation in the good (for self-sufficiency is an element of the good). Thus the city, in that it is a more self-sufficient thing than a single man, must also participate in true unity. Since this universe is composed of all perceptible things, we say, even though it seems paradoxical, that it is more unified with respect to this kind of unification than each of the parts of which it is composed. For if it has the greatest and finest of bonds (I mean proportion) through which everything in it shares an indestructible friendship and is bound in a way

which cannot be broken except by the one who bound it, as Timaeus says [cf. *Timaeus* 32C; 41A-B], it is clear to everyone that it is more unified than any of the things within it. Because of this there is a bond of feeling among all its parts, since one life and one form holds all together.

[364,10] Of course someone might say that fire is more of a unity than the totality formed by the unification of water and fire. But the unity of each of these is matter for the unity in the all and the unity in the all is the form of these and holds both together being more of an end and more of a good. And the all is more self-sufficient than each of the things within it, since they need the others but it is in need of nothing. Each particular thing is both a whole and not a whole, as Aristotle himself says, but only the all is whole and complete. If wholeness is oneness and completeness, only the all is strictly one. It is as self-sufficient as possible because it is as complete as possible and it is as unified as possible because it is as much of a whole as possible. Thus oneness and self-sufficiency coincide, for the Good is one and the One is the Good. One should not therefore say that the city, though more self-sufficient than each member of the multitude, is less of a unity, but rather that, to the extent that it is one of these things, it is also the other. Nor does making the city one mean destroying its self-sufficiency, for making the city one does not mean turning it into one man. Rather it is a matter of turning the city as a whole, while it remains a city, into a community by a process which directs the city as a whole and everyone in it towards one good. This [conversion], if it is not divided among the parts but appears as one and common to all, makes a unity out of the city which is composed of many individuals.

[365,1] Socrates himself makes this clear when he introduces the question what in particular, enables his city, which is established in a quite different manner from others, to have a real community within itself. He says it is a matter of being pleased and pained at the same things. What this means is simply that all those in the city think of the same things as good and bad. And that, in turn, means that all live with their eyes fixed on nothing apart from one good – that of the whole city.

[365,9] In the fourth place he claims that Socrates argued fallaciously when he said that what does most to make a community of the city is that everyone should call the same things 'mine' and 'not mine', instead of one of the citizens using these words of one thing and another of something else. For 'everyone' is ambiguous and may apply to the collective rather than to each individual. This is like the ambiguity in saying 'both are odd' or 'both are even'. For someone who says this means either (a) that the combination of the two is odd (or even) or else (b) that each separately is odd (or even). The ambiguity of 'both' thus generates a fallacious argument. In the same way 'everyone' is ambiguous and if 'everyone's' calling the same thing 'mine' and 'not mine' means for Socrates 'each one of them', then what Socrates wants to say will be true, for each one will call the same person 'son' and the same woman 'wife'. But they will not talk in such a way that each *as an individual* calls him his own 'son' and each *as an individual* calls

each woman his 'wife'. If, on the other hand, each speaks thus as though selecting one person from all the rest, that will be utterly impossible. How then will all call the same thing 'mine' and 'not mine', which Socrates says is the only thing that makes the city one.

[365,26] In reply to this we shall say that, while all will speak this way as individuals, each in his individual capacity will see himself as the father of all, will see children as common and will see women likewise as belonging to all. The reason for this is that no one will take a woman away from everyone else and have her to live with him and bear children for him as he wishes. Rather, intercourse will take place in accordance with the judgement of the rulers and at such time as they determine. In a similar way possessions will be common to all since, as everything belongs to the city, each will get sufficient of the necessities of life to satisfy his own needs, and the owner of everything will be, not a particular man, but the law. Similarly women will be common because the ruler, not a particular man, will have authority over their mating. They will, likewise, regard children as common. They will not know which ones they fathered (since children will be brought up so as not to be known to their fathers) and they will not use the words 'mine' and 'not mine' with reference to them. No individual will know whose father he is, even if he does know which woman he mated with. He will distinguish 'son' and 'not son' by time alone. He will call everyone who differs in age from him by a period of twenty six years his son or offspring, since at that time he was given the right to reproduce for the city. (I mean here a period of at least twenty five years and after that the time of gestation which is for the most part ten months).

[366,20] Thus the grounds on which he will say 'mine' and 'not mine' of the same thing are different in the case of women and in the case of children. So far as the latter are concerned, ignorance will lead them to think of all those who are born at the same time as children or offspring. In the case of women it is the absence of ownership, for since ownership is abolished the citizens will speak of women as 'common' in the sense of belonging to the city rather than as belonging to themselves [as individuals]. Thus each will call the same thing 'mine' because he thinks of it as belonging to the city. He will also think of himself as having one good which is identical with that of the city. Everyone will say the same thing and this will come about as the result of everyone calling the same thing 'mine' in the sense of 'belonging to all', for since the city is composed of all the citizens each will think of its property as his own and will call it 'mine'. Thus of the two senses in which one can say 'all', each will be true in its own right. When something belongs in common to the whole city as a single entity each one will think of it and speak of it as his own property. And each calls 'mine' what the city calls 'mine', so that, as far as possible they may have one existence and one life – that of the city. We have described how this will be a practical possibility for them in the case of women and of children and in the case of property.

[367,12] In the fifth place he adds the point that there is another

disadvantage in regarding nothing as private but treating everything (including women, children and property) as common. This is that people neglect what is held in common and give greater attention to what is private. The result is that, since everything is seen as common, no one takes care of anything.

[367,17] But to raise this problem about people who have been brought up in his way is, as Socrates says, absurd. The method by which he proposes to educate them by training them in music <and gymnastics> is clear from the text. Those who undergo this education must be tested at each stage in their lives to see whether <they retain the doctrine> that they should think of nothing as being of particular concern to them apart from what is good for the city ... [text is corrupt]. Aristotle himself says in the *Ethics* [*EN* 1177b31-4] that although people in general encourage us to think of mortal things, we should not follow their advice but should rather make ourselves immortal so far as we can. Similarly Socrates <said>... that although most people attend to their own affairs rather than to what is common, those who are well brought up should, on the contrary, live in a way that sets what is common above what is private, for nothing else is as prone to drag our souls down to the lowest level as is that affliction which we call 'private concern'. He showed that this comes about as the result of a section of the citizens administering the affairs of the whole. A disregard of what is private turns our attention to the whole, and again straining <towards the whole> turns our attention to the one. Thus we may say that <this criticism based> on the neglect of what is common also fails to touch those educated by Socrates' method ... [text is lost from this point]. RFS

Reading

Dominic O'Meara, *Platonopolis: Platonic Political Philosophy in Late Antiquity*, Oxford 2003, 87-91.

R.F. Stalley, 'The unity of the state: Plato, Aristotle and Proclus', *Polis* 14, 1995, 129-49, from which the translation is taken.

On the Stoic response: A.A. Long, 'Stoic philosophers on persons, property ownership and community', in Richard Sorabji, ed., *Aristotle and After, Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies*, suppl. 68, 1997, 13-31.

Malcolm Schofield, *The Stoic Idea of the City*, Cambridge 1991.

17(j) The morality of Homer's myths

For two types of myth, Homer's with a deep allegorical meaning and Plato's clean stories for younger listeners, see **Logic and Metaphysics 2(g)**.

Proclus' apologia for the apparent immorality of Homer's myths is provided in his *in Remp.*, vol. 1, Sixth Essay, pp. 69-154 Kroll, while pp. 154-206 seek to explain Plato's criticisms of Homer and exclusion of poets from the ideal society. Besides the French translation by Festugière of *in Remp.*, Gesner's epitome of the Apologia was translated by Thomas Taylor in vol. 1 of *The Works of Plato*, London 1804, repr. in Kathleen Raine, George Mills Harper, *Thomas Taylor, the Platonist*, Princeton 1969.

Reading

Anne Sheppard, *Studies on the Fifth and Sixth Essays of Proclus' Commentary on the Republic*, Hypomnemata, Göttingen 1980.

17(k) *EN* 5 on justice

There are no extant Neoplatonist commentaries on *EN* from the period 200-600 AD, but some of the fascinating material on justice in Book 5 is discussed in much later commentaries, and there is a defence of the naturalness of justice in Alexander(?) *Mantissa* 19.

(i) Economics

In the twelfth century, Michael of Ephesus wrote a commentary (*CAG* 19), in which he takes up Aristotle's discussion at *EN*1133b13-14 of *khreia*. It is sometimes said that Aristotle is here talking of demand as making products commensurable, although some avoid translating *khreia* as 'demand', because the term carries such a weight of modern theory. The point made by Laiou is that Michael adds a reference to the influence of supply (*euthêneia*, abundance), although the same precautions will be needed against importing too much of modern theory.

(1) Michael of Ephesus *in EN* 38,24-33

What [Aristotle] means is that that one could see the same thing happening with money as with demand (*khreia*). For as with demand we do not always need and have a demand for other people's things in the same way, so money too does not always have the same value, but it changes and what was previously worth more is later worth nothing or less. Nonetheless, money is at any rate more steady and must be used as a measure of goods exchanged, and must be given prominence over everything else and be more valued. But sometimes it is worth more, sometimes less or nothing, or in times of abundance (*euthêneiai*) it is worth a lot, but in times of extreme food shortage and dearth of all the fruits, nothing. RRKS

Reading

Angeliki Laiou, '*Nummus parit nummos*: l'usurier, le justice et le philosophe à Byzance', *Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres, Comptes rendus des séances*, Paris 1999, 583-604.

(ii) Just war

Averroes *in EN* uses Aristotle's advocacy of judicial discretion (*epieikeia*) to remedy the generalised character of rules in particular circumstances. Averroes' intention is to modify the doctrine of Islamic jihad, insofar as it viewed it as a general obligation on Muslims to kill polytheists.

(2) Averroes *Middle Commentary in EN* 565f89a Hebrew = Latin Venice 1574 AD, p. 79a-b; 1560 AD, p. 247b

And this will be clear [or you will clarify this] from the laws laid down in the matter of war in the law of the Muslims, for the command in it regarding war is general, until they uproot and destroy entirely whoever disagrees with them. But regarding this, there are times when peace is more choiceworthy than war. And as for [the fact] that the Muslim public requires this generality, despite the impossibility of destroying and uprooting their enemies entirely, they attain in this great harm; this is ignorance on their part of the intention of the legislator, may God watch over him. Therefore it is appropriate to say that peace is preferable to war sometimes. NF

Reading

Noah Feldman, *Reading the Nicomachean Ethics with Ibn Rushd*, DPhil, Oxford 1994.

(iii) Natural justice

At *EN* 1134b18ff., Aristotle speaks not of natural law, but of natural justice. However, Thomas Aquinas' commentary *in EN*, at 1019, takes this as an opportunity to draw the later distinction between natural law which applies even to animals, and the law of nations (*ius gentium*). The law of nations is mentioned first in Cicero alongside the law of nature, but the two are only distinguished later, especially by jurists after AD 200.

Alexander(?) *Mantissa* 156,29-159,14, is an argument that 'what is just [is so] by nature'. The argument it thinks most important is from language use as implying the superiority of human society. This argument, not used by Aristotle, has been seen as reflecting both Stoicism and Epicureanism.

(3) Alexander(?) *Mantissa* 157,9-18

But the greatest sign that human beings are communal by nature, and much more than all other living beings, is that they alone are rational (*logikos*) and they alone can employ speech (*logos*), and that speech relates only to the indication of one's own thoughts and sights to those with one. At any rate when noone is present with us, or when we do not want to indicate any of our own thoughts to any of those who are present or to learn anything from them, we keep silence, being satisfied with thinking alone. So if there is something which is the only thing for which we use the speech that has been given to us by nature, and nature produces and gives nothing in vain, it will have given speech to us as being communal [beings]. RWS

Reading

R.W. Sharples, 'Justice is natural: Alexander of Aphrodisias, *Mantissa*, section 19, 156-159, Bruns', in Christopher Gill, ed., *Ancient and Modern Approaches to Ethical Objectivity*, in preparation.

18. Religious Practice

The whole subject of religious practice is illuminated by Porphyry's intellectual honesty which leads him to express doubts about how sacrifice, theurgy, prayer, magic, divination and demonic forces can work. Though Porphyry was considered the greatest intellectual scourge of the Christians in Antiquity, and his *Against the Christians* was burnt twice, he raised similarly searching questions for his co-religionists, and in some ways is close to his Christian opponents, as in his insistence here that the true sacrifice is that of a pure intellect. Iamblichus, his probable pupil, provides in *Myst.* an excoriating reply, which seeks to explain the efficacy of religious practice in non-physical terms, which he criticises Porphyry for overlooking. Iamblichus wrote just before Constantine made Christianity the official religion of the Empire, and was seen as the great authority by subsequent pagans, not least the Emperor Julian who sought for two years to restore pagan religion. Although Proclus reveres and seeks to follow Iamblichus, Damascius, whose Athenian school was closed in 529 AD by the Christian Emperor Justinian, regards Proclus as misunderstanding Iamblichus pervasively. The fragments of Damascius' *Philosophical History*, which award good and (more often) bad marks to his philosophical co-religionists, are assembled, translated and explained for the first time by Polymnia Athanassiadi, 1999. I have argued in the Introduction that Ammonius and the sixth-century Alexandrian school made pagan religious practice less central to their teaching and writing.

Reading

Polymnia Athanassiadi, *Damascius' Philosophical History*, Athens 1999.

Sara Rappe, *Reading Neoplatonism*, Cambridge 2000.

H.D. Saffrey, 'Abamon, pseudonyme de Jamblique', in *Philomathes: Studies and Essays in the Humanities in Memory of Philip Merlan*, The Hague 1971, 227-39, repr. in his *Récherches sur le néoplatonisme après Plotin*, Paris 1990.

H.D. Saffrey, 'Reflexions sur la pseudonymie Abbamôn-Jamblique', in John Cleary, ed., *Traditions of Platonism: Essays in Honour of John Dillon*, Aldershot 1999, 307-18.

Richard Sorabji, 'Divine names and sordid deals in Ammonius' Alexandria', in Andrew Smith ed., *Neoplatonism and Society*, Cardiff 2003.

18(a) Sacrifice, propitiation, forgiveness, invocation, and the nature of the gods

Porphyry tried to persuade his fellow Platonists that, if you understand animals, humans and the gods, you will not think it right for humans to sacrifice animals to them. He did not succeed; Iamblichus replied that sacrifice is appropriate, even though by some Neoplatonists, the meat-eating, which for pagans went hand in hand with sacrifice, is indulged only to the extent that piety is thought to require.

Porphyry cites Theophrastus' rejection of three possible reasons for animal sacrifice, and goes on to expand the third point that sacrifice will not secure us benefits. For the gods have no needs (*Abstinence* 2.33; 2.37; *Letter to Marcella* 18;

Philosophy from Oracles in Augustine *City of God* 19.23), and will not change their character (*Abstinence* 2.39; 2.41, translated in **18(f)** below). Moreover, the gods cannot be affected (*Letter to Anebo*, pp. 4-5 Sodano), and they are not angry with us (*Letter to Marcella* 18, despite *Abst* 2.61.8 below, 'complaining' – *skhetliazein*). The right sacrifice is that of a pure mind, which meat-eating impedes. One should come either in silence to the immaterial gods, or with hymns to the divine heavens. Animal sacrifice merely attracts evil demons. Porphyry makes some of the same points about invocation of the gods.

Porphyry's views are put in several works, including the fascinating *On Abstinence from Animal Food*, and the now fragmentary *Letter to Anebo*, whose respectful questioning of Egyptian religion is described by Augustine, *City of God* 10.11, partly translated under **18(f)** below. Iamblichus offers a reply to the letter purporting to come from Abamon, Egyptian for 'Father of God', a term used by Porphyry *Sentences* 32 for a person who has achieved the highest level of virtue. Concerning sacrifice, Iamblichus agrees that different gods require different worship and adds (*Myst.* 5.18) that different worshippers must worship differently, with which Proclus agrees (see under **18(c)** below). But he replies to Porphyry that material gods require material sacrifice. Moreover, we do benefit, as Porphyry himself recognised, *Philosophy from Oracles* in Augustine *City of God* 19.23, saying that seeking God purifies and deifies us. But Iamblichus gives a different reason, that the rituals can raise us to union with God. Porphyry denies that rituals can do this, *de Regressu Animae*, in Augustine *City of God* 10.9; 10.27, translated in **18(b)** below.

Iamblichus continues: even though the gods cannot be affected, they can still act of their own will, and we can give a metaphorical sense to their being angry, which is *our* stepping out of their light. Compare Sallustius *On the Gods* 14 and Simplicius *Commentary on Epictetus* ch. 38, lines 674-703 Hadot (= ch. 31, 107,15-52 Dübner) who extends the idea also to the Christian belief in God's forgiveness of repentant sinners. He denies that God is angry, but explains our propitiations as tokens of our need to repent, because of our having become unlike God in his goodness and needing to pull ourselves back by the rope of entreaty and prayer to that unmoving rock. Simplicius here echoes not only Iamblichus' account of divine anger, but also his point, *Myst.* 1.12, that invocations lead us to the gods, not the gods to us. According to Iamblichus, we can benefit also because of the sympathetic interconnexions in the physical universe. Yet sympathy is merely a fact accompanying sacrifices, and does not represent the true mode of sacrifice. What Iamblichus does invoke is the love and attachment by which the gods bind us to them.

We can again benefit because the special kinship (*oikeiotês*) between animals and their daemonic creators makes them suitable intermediaries between us and the gods, Iamblichus *Myst.* 5.9, and 6.3, the latter translated under **18(g)** below. This reverses both the usual idea of humans as intermediate between men and gods, and the view of Porphyry that animals (*pace* the Stoics) have a kinship with us that forbids us to kill them.

Iamblichus thinks, *Myst* 5.17, that favours concerning crop failure, sterility and property cannot come directly from sacrifices to immaterial gods. What is needed is a ritual involving material objects and beings below the immaterial gods.

(1) Porphyry quoting Theophrastus *Abstinence* 2.24

There are, moreover, three reasons altogether for sacrificing to the gods: to honour them, to give thanks, or from need of some good things. As [we

behave] to good men, so too we think we ought to offer the gods first-fruits. We honour the gods because we want evil to be averted from us and goods to be provided for us, or because we have had benefits from them, or simply to honour their condition of goodness. So also in the case of animals, if they should be offered to the gods, they should be sacrificed for one of these reasons; for what we do sacrifice, we sacrifice for one of these reasons.

[2] Now would one of us, or would a god, think he was receiving justice, when the offering instantly shows us to be unjust, or would he rather think that doing such a thing is dishonour? For we acknowledge that we will do wrong in killing for sacrifice an animal that has done us no wrong; so we should not sacrifice any of the other animals in order to confer honour.

[3] Nor should we do so to return thanks for benefactions; for one who is giving back a just reward for a benefaction, and fair recompense for a good deed, ought not to provide them by treating someone badly. He will no more seem to be making recompense than someone who robs his neighbour to crown others as a return of thanks and honour.

[4] We should not even sacrifice because we need some good. Someone who seeks by unjust action to be treated well falls under suspicion that he will not be grateful even when he is treated well. So animals should not be be sacrificed to the gods even in hope of benefaction.

[5] It might be possible to hide from a human being that you are doing this, but it is impossible to hide anything from the gods. So if sacrifice should be for one of these reasons, but this [animal sacrifice] should not be done for any of them, it is clear that animals should not be sacrificed at all. GC

(2) Porphyry *Abstinence* 2.33

For myself, I am not attempting to destroy the customs which prevail among each people: politics is not my present subject. But the laws by which we are governed allow the divine power to be honoured even by very simple and inanimate things, so by choosing the simplest we shall sacrifice in accordance with the law of the city, and will ourselves strive to offer a fitting sacrifice, pure in all respects when we approach the gods.

[2] In any case, if the act of sacrifice has the value of a first-fruit offering, and of thanksgiving to the gods for what we have from them for our needs, it would be quite irrational to abstain from animate creatures ourselves, yet make offerings of them to the gods. The gods are not worse than we are so that they need what we do not, nor is it holy to give first-fruits of a food from which we ourselves abstain.

[3] We have also found that human custom was like this when people ate no animate food and made no offerings of animals, but from the time they ate them they also offered them to the gods. So now, presumably, it is proper for someone who abstains from animals to make offerings of those foods he does eat. GC

(3) Porphyry *Abstinence* 2.34.1-4

So we too shall sacrifice. But we shall make, as is fitting, different sacrifices to different powers.

[2] To the god who rules over all, as a wise man [Apollonius of Tyana] said, we shall offer nothing perceptible by the senses, either by burning or in words. For there is nothing material which is not at once impure to the immaterial. So not even words (*logos*) expressed in speech are appropriate for him, nor yet internal words when they have been contaminated by the passion of the soul. But we shall worship him in pure silence and with pure thoughts about him.

[3] We must, then, be joined with and made like him, and must offer our own uplifting as a holy sacrifice to the god, for it is both our hymn and our security. This sacrifice is fulfilled without passion (*apatheia*) of the soul and in contemplation of the god. For his offspring, the intelligible gods, hymn-singing in words should be added.

[4] For sacrifice is an offering to each god from what he has given, with which he sustains us and maintains our essence in being. GC

(4) Porphyry *Abstinence* 2.37

The first god, being incorporeal, unmoved and indivisible, neither contained in anything nor bound by himself, needs nothing external, as has been said.

[2] Nor does the soul of the world, which by nature has three-dimensionality and self-movement; its nature is to choose beautiful and well-ordered movement, and to move the body of the world in accordance with the best principles. It has received the body into itself and envelops it [cf. Plato *Timaeus* 43B and **6(b)** above], and yet is incorporeal and has no share in any passion.

[3] To the other gods, the world and the fixed and wandering stars – visible gods composed of soul and body – we should render thanks as has been described, by sacrifices of inanimate things.

[4] So there remains the multitude of invisible gods, whom Plato [*Timaeus* 40D] called *daimones* without distinction. People have given some of them names, and they receive from everyone honours equal to the gods and other forms of worship. Others have no name at all in most places, but acquire a name and cult inconspicuously from a few people in villages or in some cities.

[5] The remaining multitude is given the general name of *daimones*, and there is a conviction about all of them that they can do harm if they are angered by being neglected and not receiving the accustomed worship, and on the other hand that they can do good to those who make them well-disposed by prayer and supplication and sacrifices and all that goes with them. GC

(5) Porphyry *Abstinence* 2.45

That is why even sorcerers have thought such advance protection [purification] necessary; but it is not effective in all circumstances, for they stir up wicked daemons to gratify their lusts.

[2] So holiness is not for sorcerers, but for godly men who are wise about the gods, and it brings as a guard on all sides, for those who practise it, their attachment to (*oikeiôsis*) the divine.

[3] If only sorcerers would practise it constantly, they would have no enthusiasm for sorcery, because holiness would exclude them from enjoyment of the things for the sake of which they commit impiety. But, being filled with passions, they abstain for a little from impure foods, yet are full of impurity and pay the penalty for their lawlessness towards the universe: some penalties are inflicted by the beings they themselves provoke, some by the justice which watches over all mortal concerns, both actions and thoughts.

[4] Holiness, both internal and external, belongs to a godly man, who strives to fast from the passions of the soul just as he fasts from those foods which arouse the passions, who feeds on wisdom about the gods and becomes like them (*homoiousthai*, cf. Plato *Theaetetus* 176B) by right thinking about the divine; a man sanctified by intellectual sacrifice (*noera thusia*), who approaches the god in white clothing, with a truly pure freedom from passion (*apatheia*) in the soul and with a body which is light and not weighed down with the alien juices of other creatures or with passions of the soul. GC

(6) Porphyry *Abstinence* 2.61

The best offering to the gods is a pure intellect (*nous*) and a soul unaffected by passion (*apathês*); it is also appropriate to make them moderate offerings of other things, not casually but with full commitment.

[2] Honours to the gods must be like the front seats given to good men, and like standing up for them and asking them to sit down, not like paying taxes.

[3] If a man can say [author unknown],

'If you remember my good deeds and love me,
Long since, Philinos, you repaid my favour:
it was for this I showed you favour first',

[4] surely a god will be satisfied with this. That is why Plato says [*Laws* 716D; 717A] 'it is right for a good man to sacrifice and always to be in conversation with the gods by prayers and dedications and sacrifices and all forms of worship', but for a bad man 'great effort about the gods is in vain'.

[5] The good man knows what must be sacrificed, from what one must abstain, what should be eaten and from what offerings should be made; the

bad man, bringing the gods honours suited to his own disposition and to what he wants, acts impiously rather than piously.

[6] That is why Plato thinks the philosopher should not be involved in bad customs, since it is neither dear to the gods nor advantageous to people, but should try to change them for the better, or, if he cannot, should not adapt himself to them, but should go his way on the straight path, fearing neither danger from the many nor any other abuse that may arise.

[7] It would be terrible if, when the Syrians would not eat fish or the Hebrews pigs, and most of the Phoenicians and the Egyptians would not eat cows, and when many kings tried hard to make them change they would endure death rather than break the law, we should choose to break the laws of nature (*phuseôs nomoi*) and the precepts of the gods for fear of people and what they might say.

[8] The divine chorus of gods and divine men would complain (*skhetliazein*) on seeing us open-mouthed at the opinions of bad people and living subject to fear of them, we who every day practise in our lifetime dying to others [cf. Plato's *Phaedo* 67E]. GC

(7) Porphyry *Letter to Marcella* 18, 286,3-13

This is the greatest fruit of piety: to honour the divine according to ancestral tradition, not because the divine has needs, but because its most awesome and blessed majesty calls us to revere it. When the altars of the god are served they do no harm, when neglected they confer no benefit. But 'whoever honours God as if God had needs fails to realise that he thinks himself greater than God [also in the *Sentences of Sextus*, see H. Chadwick, *The Sentences of Sextus, Pyth.* 25]'. 'The gods do not harm us because they are angered, but because they are unrecognised. Anger is alien to the gods, for anger results from something against one's wishes, but there is nothing which is against God's wish.' [Chadwick, *Pyth.* 8] So do not defile the divine with false human opinions. You will not harm the divine, for it is blessed for ever and all harm has been excluded from its incorruption, but you will blind yourself to the recognition of that which is greatest and most important. GC

(8) Porphyry *Philosophy from Oracles* in Augustine *City of God* 19.23

There are somewhere, he [Porphyry] says, very small earthly spirits, subject to the power of evil demons. The Hebrew sages (and this Jesus was one of them, as you have heard from the oracles of Apollo cited above) warned religious people off these evil demons and lesser spirits, and forbade any attention to them: rather, they should worship the gods of heaven and above all worship God the Father. Now this, he says, is what the gods also teach, and we have shown earlier how they tell us to turn our mind to God, and how they command us to worship him everywhere. But untaught and impious natures, which fate has indeed not allowed to

receive gifts from the gods nor to have a concept of immortal Jove, heard neither the gods nor the divine men: they rejected all the gods, and so far from hating the forbidden demons, they revered them. They pretend to worship God, but they do none of those acts by which alone God is adored. For God, the Father of all, needs nothing, but it is good for us to adore him through justice and chastity and the other virtues, making our very life a prayer to him by imitating him and seeking to know him. For seeking purifies, he says, and imitation deifies by directing our disposition towards him. GC

(9) Porphyry *Letter to Anebo, ap.* Eusebium *PE* 5.10.10; *GCS* 8.1, 244,6-10 Mras (= Porphyry *Letter to Anebo*, pp. 4-5 Sodano)

If some gods are unaffected (*apathês*) but some are affected, and it is for the latter (people say) that they set up phalli and utter obscenities, then invocations (*prosklêseis*) of the gods will be pointless, and so will appeals for help and propitiation (*exilaseis*) of wrath (*mênis*) and expiatory rites (*ekthuseis*), and especially the so-called compulsion (*anankê*) of the gods. For the unaffected cannot be charmed or forced or compelled. GC

The following come from Iamblichus' reply to Porphyry's *Letter to Anebo* and from Simplicius', variant treatment of propitiation.

(10) Iamblichus *Myst.* 1.12 Des Places

'But invocations (*klêseis*)', the objection [of Porphyry] goes, 'are addressed to the gods as if they were subject to being affected (*pathê*), so that it is not only daemons that are thus subject, but also the gods.'

[40,18] In fact, however, your assumption is not correct. For the illumination that comes about as a result of invocations is self-revelatory and self-willed (*autothelês*), and is far removed from being drawn down by force, but rather proceeds to manifestation by reason of its own divine energy and perfection, and is as far superior to (human) voluntary motion as the divine will (*boulêsis*) of the Good is to the life of deliberate choice (*proairetikê*). It is by virtue of such will, then, that the gods in their benevolence and propitious grace (*hileôi*) ungrudgingly (*apthonôs*, cf. Plato *Timaeus* 29E2) shed their light upon theurgists, summoning up their souls to themselves and orchestrating their union with them, accustoming them, even while still in the body, to detach themselves from their bodies, and to turn themselves towards their eternal and intelligible first principle.

[41,12] It is plain, indeed, from the facts themselves that what we are just now speaking of is a method of salvation for the soul; for it is in the contemplation of the 'blessed visions' that the soul achieves another life and exerts a different activity, and considers itself then to be no longer a human – and quite rightly so; for often, having abandoned its own life, it has gained in exchange the most blessed activity of the gods. If, then, it is

purification (*katharsis*) from passions (*pathê*) and freedom from the toils of generation and unification with the divine first principle that the ascent through invocations (*klêseis*) procures for the priests, how on earth can one attach passions to this process? For it is not the case that such activity draws down the passionless (*apathês*) and pure into proneness to passion and impurity, but on the contrary it renders us, who have come to be subject to passions by reason of the process of birth, pure and immutable.

[42,6] But not even in the case of the invocations (*prosklêseis*) is it through the experiencing of passion that they link the priests to the gods; it is rather in virtue of the divine affection (*philia*) which holds together all things that they provide a union of indissoluble involvement – not, as the name seems immediately to imply, inclining the mind of the gods to men, but rather, as the truth of things itself desires to teach us, disposing the mind of man to participation in the gods, leading it up to the gods and bringing it into accord with them through harmonious persuasion. And it is for this reason, indeed, that the sacred names of the gods and the other types of divine symbol which have the capacity of raising us up to the gods are enabled to link us to them. JD

(11) Iamblichus *Myst.* 1.13 Des Places

Again, the question of 'propitiations (*exilaseis*) of (divine) wrath (*mênis*, cf. Porphyry *Letter to Anebo*, pp. 4-5 Sodano, above)' will become clear, if we take the trouble to comprehend the true nature of the 'wrath' of the gods. This is not, as is believed in some quarters, any sort of ancient and abiding anger, but a consequence of the rejection of the beneficent solicitude of the gods, which involves our turning ourselves away from them, just as though in the middle of the day we were to hide ourselves from the light, and so bring darkness upon ourselves and deprive ourselves of the excellent gift of the gods. 'Propitiation', then, has the capacity to turn towards participation in the higher realm, and to bring us into communion with the divine care which had been denied us, and to bind together harmoniously with one another, participants and participated. So far, then, is it from accomplishing its work through the medium of passion, that it actually relieves us of the passion and turbulence which accompanies our turning away from the gods.

[43,16] As for the 'expiatory rites' (*ekthuseis*), their purpose is to heal the evil that is present in the terrestrial realm, and to ensure that no deviation or passion manifests itself in us. Whether such a result comes about by means of gods or daemons, the purpose of the rites is to invoke these as helpers and protectors and saviours, and through them they conjure away all harm emanating from influences from the sense-world. There is no way, after all, that those who turn aside the assaults of the world of nature and generation can achieve this through the employment of passions. And if anyone thinks that the cutting off of protective care automatically brings with it some harm, then the persuasion which expiatory rites exercise upon

the higher classes of being, recalling them once again to care and goodwill towards us, and averting the deprivation of this, would be entirely pure and immutable. JD

(12) Simplicius, *Commentary on Epictetus* ch. 38, lines 674-703 Hadot (= ch. 31, 107,15-52 Dübner)

So why is this position that divinity is won over by gifts and dedications and prayers and benefactions and entreaties, and that it forgives sinners, so popular? And what is its source? Perhaps there is something to the belief. Certainly when the matter is stated simply [107,20] in this way, it isn't true or pious to accept it. But when the sinners genuinely repent, it contributes to their reversion to the divine, and becomes a token of their repentance and of their submission, not just in the soul but in the body as well, when they bend their knee and make obeisance, and dedicate external things and make expenditures for what is pleasing to God. For when we sin, God doesn't turn away or become angry or separate himself from us; and when we repent, God doesn't revert or approach us because he has become good. [107,30] These are all human attributes, and remote from divine blessedness, which is unchangeable in every respect. Rather it is we who tear ourselves away from there when we have become bad by our fall into an unnatural state, and have become unlike divine goodness by becoming unjust, impious, and devoid of wisdom. We do not do so because we are ever able to flee from his providence, which pervades everything, but to furnish a starting point for justice, the art of curing wickedness, within ourselves (since it is through ourselves that we are then suffering the disease) and to render ourselves fit for that medical providence and ministration [107,40] from God. And as we recover our natural state, and become like him (for becoming just and pious along with wisdom is becoming like God) we approach him and are assimilated to him.

We describe our reversion towards him, as though it were his reversion towards us. Our experience in this is similar to that of people who tie a rope around a rock at sea, and draw themselves and their vessel to the rock by pulling on it, but, owing to their inexperience of the event, think not that they are approaching the rock, but that the rock is little by little coming to them. Acts of repentance, [107,50] entreaties, prayers and the like correspond to the rope, since it is by them that people who have been pulled away achieve their reversion. TB, CB

(13) Iamblichus *Myst.* 5.7 Des Places

The argument therefore demands that we state in what respect sacrifices possess the capacity to produce results, and connect us to the gods, who are the principal causes of what comes to be. If we say that, in the universe, being as it is one single living being, possessing a common life in all parts of itself, the communion (*koinônia*) of like powers, or the conflict of contrary

ones, or a certain suitability (*epitêdeiotês*) of the active for the passive principle, propels together like and suitable (*epitêdeios*) elements, pervading in virtue of a single sympathy (*sumpatheia*) even the most distant things as if they were most contiguous, we state in this way something of the truth and of the necessary consequences of sacrifices, but we have still not demonstrated the true mode in which sacrifices operate. For it is not in nature, nor in physical necessity, that the essence of the gods resides, so as to be roused up by natural influences or by powers which extend throughout the whole of nature, but it is defined in its own terms, external to these influences, having nothing in common with them either in essence or in potency or in any other respect. JD

(14) Iamblichus *Myst.* 5.9 Des Places

It is better, then, to seek the cause [of the efficacy of sacrifices] in love (*philia*) and attachment (*oikeiôsis*), and in the relation which binds together creators with their creations and generators with their offspring. When therefore, under the guidance of this common principle, we comprehend that some animal or plant growing in the earth simply and purely preserves the intention (*boulêma*) of its maker, then, through (*dia*) this, we set in motion, by affinity (*oikeiôs*), the creative cause which, without in any way compromising its purity, presides over this entity. Since these relationships are numerous, and some have an immediate source of influence, as in the case of daemonic ones, while others are superior to these, having divine causes, and, higher than these again, there is the one pre-eminent cause, all these levels of cause are activated by the performance of perfect sacrifice; each level of cause is related to the sacrifice in accordance with the rank to which it has been allotted. If, on the other hand, the sacrifice is imperfect, its influence proceeds to a certain level, but it cannot progress beyond that. In consequence of this, many people believe that sacrifices are offered to good daemons, many others, to the lowest powers of the gods, and many others, again, to the cosmic or even terrestrial powers of daemons or gods. In this conjecture they are at least partially not incorrect, but they fail to realise that the totality of their power and their benefits as a whole derive from the divine realm as a whole. JD

(15) Iamblichus *Myst.* 5.10 Des Places

As for us, we recognise all levels, both beings on the level of nature, which are mutually stimulated to motion, as if parts of a single living thing, by virtue of suitability (*epitêdiotês*), sympathy (*sumpatheia*), or antipathy (*antipatheia*), as basic subjects which follow in the train of, and are subservient to, the cause of the efficacy of sacrifices; then the level of daemons and terrestrial or cosmic divine powers, as being our most immediate superior in rank; the most perfect and dominant class of causes of the efficacy of sacrifices, however, we declare to be linked to the demiurgic and

supremely perfect powers. And since these embrace within themselves all other causes of whatever sort, we declare that in conjunction with these are set in motion at once all others such as have any creative power, and from all these there descends a common benefit to the whole realm of generation, sometimes upon cities and peoples, or tribes of all sorts, or other segments of humanity larger or smaller than these, at other times bestowing benefits ungrudgingly (*aphthonôs*, cf. *Timaeus* 29E2) upon households or individuals, carrying out this apportionment of their own will (*boulêsis*), and not under any pressure (*pathos*) from the would-be beneficiaries, making their judgement with an intellect free from emotion (*nous apathês*), out of a sense of attachment (*oikeiotês*) and kinship (*sungeneia*), as to how they should grant their favours, one single bond of love (*philia*), embracing the totality of beings, effecting this bond through an ineffable (*arrêtos*) process of communion (*koinônia*).

[211,19] This, after all, is a truer approach, and one much more appropriate to the essence and power of the gods, than what you [Porphyry] are suggesting, 'that they are ensnared (*deleazesthai*) by the vapours of, in particular, animal sacrifices.' For even if there is something in the nature of a body enveloping daemons [see **2(h)** above], which some hold to be nourished by sacrifices, this is unchangeable and impassible, luminous and free from needs, so that nothing flows out from it, nor does it require any influx from outside. And even if one were to postulate this, on the grounds that the cosmos and the air within it receive unceasing exhalations from the terrestrial regions, such inflows being spread about from all quarters equally, yet what need do daemons have of sacrifices? In any case, what flows in is not going to compensate in any symmetrical manner for what flows out from them, in such a way that no excess nor deficiency should ever arise, to ensure that daemonic bodies should enjoy unvarying equilibrium and uniformity. For it is surely not the case that the Creator (*dêmiourgos*) has set before all living creatures on sea and land copious and readily available sustenance, but for those beings superior to us has contrived a deficiency of this. He would not, surely, have provided for all other living things, naturally and from their own resources, an abundance of the daily necessities of life, while to daemons he gave a source of nourishment which was adventitious and dependent on the contributions of us mortals; and thus, it would seem, if we through laziness or some other pretext were to neglect such contributions, the bodies of daemons would suffer deprivation, and would experience disequilibrium and disorder.

[213,8] Why, then, do the advocates of this view not go on to overturn the whole order of nature, so as to place us in a higher rank, and make us more powerful [than the daemons]? For if they make us the nourishers and fulfillers of the needs of the daemons, we will be causally superior to the daemons; for it is a general rule that each thing derives its nurture and fulfilment from that to which it owes its generation. This truth one may observe at the level of visible generation. One may see it, for instance, in the case of things in the cosmos; for terrestrial things derive their nourish-

ment from celestial sources. But it is more especially clear in the case of invisible causes. For soul is brought to completion by intellect, and nature by soul, and all other things similarly are nourished by their causes. If, then, it is impossible that we are the originating causes of daemons, by the same reasoning we are not responsible for their nourishment. JD

(16) Iamblichus *Myst.* 5.17 Des Places

What benefits, after all, could we expect to derive from gods who are totally exempt from all human generation in matters concerning crop failure or sterility or the securing of abundance or any other of the needs of daily life? None at all, surely. For those who are freed from all such concerns do not have the capacity for concerning themselves with such gifts. If, however, one were to say that the gods who are such as to concern themselves with these are embraced by the completely immaterial gods, and that in embracing them they also embrace their gifts by virtue of a single primal causality, one could claim that there descends from them a certain superabundance of divine beneficence; but what no one may assert is that they do this themselves through any direct application to the activities of human life. For such supervision (*prostasia*) of human affairs is a particularised thing, and is performed with a certain degree of [downward] attention (*epistrophê*), and it is not entirely separated from bodies, and it cannot receive pure and unsullied attention (*epistasia*). So then, for such operations a mode of cultic procedure is suitable that is involved with bodies and dependent upon generation, not one which is entirely immaterial and incorporeal. For the pure mode is totally transcendent and lacks compatibility, while that which makes use of bodies and powers that operate through bodies is supremely compatible, being capable of introducing successful functioning into our life, and able also to avert such reverses as may arise, endowing the race of mortals with symmetry and good temperament. JD

(17) Iamblichus *Myst.* 5.19 Des Places

It is on the same basis that one may make also the following division. Of the divine essences and powers, some possess a soul and a nature subject and subservient to their creations, according to their own will (*boulesthai*); others are entirely distinct from soul and nature (by which I mean divine soul and nature, not those which are cosmic and generative); some others again, median between these, provide a means for these to establish communion (*koinônia*) with each other, either by means of a single indivisible bond, or by reason of the ungrudging generosity (*metadosis apthonos*) of the superior powers, or through the unimpeded receptivity of the inferior, or through a concord which binds both together. When, then, we offer cult to the gods who rule over soul and nature, it is not inappropriate to these to offer them natural forces, and it is not derogatory to sacrifice to them bodies subject to the direction of nature; for all the works of nature

serve them and contribute something to their administration. But when we set out to honour those gods which are in and of themselves uniform, it is proper to accord them honours which transcend matter; for to these are appropriate gifts which are intellectual and proper to incorporeal life, such as are conferred by virtue and wisdom, and any perfect and complete goods of the soul. And further, the intermediate entities which administer median goods will sometimes be suitably served by a double set of gifts, sometimes by gifts common to both levels, or again by gifts that signal a breaking-away from the lower and an accession to the higher, or at any rate those that fulfil this median role in one way or another. JD

Reading

Richard Sorabji, *Animal Minds and Human Morals*, London & Ithaca, NY 1993, ch. 13.

18(b) Theurgy

Plotinus thinks that we have an undescended soul uninterruptedly and unconsciously contemplating in the intelligible world. But Iamblichus, who denies this except for the case of a few exceptional persons (see **3(e)** above), thinks that we need another kind of help, in order to contact that world: theurgy. Plotinus' philosophising and thinking is not enough. The *Chaldaean Oracles* of the late second century AD are cited as a theurgical text.

(1) Iamblichus *DA ap.* Stobaeum 1,454,10-22 Wachsmuth

Plotinus, on the other hand, and most Platonists, consider the most perfect purification to be a divestment (*apothesis*) of the emotions and of the knowledge that makes use of images, a disdain for all opinion, a dissociation from thought involved with matter, a being filled with Intellect and Being, and an assimilation of the thinking subject with the object of its thought. Some of them also often say that purification concerns the irrational soul and the opiniative part of the reason, but that the essential reason itself and the intellect of the soul are always superior to the cosmos, are joined to the intelligible realm, and are never in need of perfection or of release from superfluous elements. JD, JF

(2) Iamblichus *Myst.* 2.11, 96,13-97,9 Des Places

It is not any concept (*ennoia*) which joins theurgists to the gods, for what would prevent those who engage in contemplative philosophy from having theurgic union with the gods? But that is not the truth: the fulfilment of ineffable actions which act by divine means, surpassing all intellection (*noêsis*), and the power of unuttered symbols which are thought (*noeisthai*) only by the gods, establish theurgic union. That is why we do not activate these events by thinking (*noein*), for in that way their activity would be intellectual and dependent on us, and neither of these is true. For even

when we are not thinking, the signs themselves, of themselves, do the work which is their own, and the ineffable power of the gods, to which these signs refer, itself of itself recognises its own images (*eikones*), but not through being awakened by our intellection. GC

(3) Iamblichus *Myst.* 8.7, 200,14-19 Des Places

It is not the case, though, that everything in the realm of nature is in the grip of fate, but there is another principle of the soul superior to all nature and generation, in virtue of which we can unite ourselves to the gods and transcend the cosmic order, and partake in eternal life and in the activity of the supracelestial gods. It is in virtue of this principle that we are actually able to liberate (*luein*) ourselves. For when the better elements within us are active, and the soul is elevated towards the beings superior to it, then it separates itself fully from those things that tie it to generation, and it detaches itself from the worse, and changes one life for another, and gives itself to another order of things, completely abandoning its previous one. JD

But how much can theurgy achieve? Porphyry says that it purifies the imaginative part of the soul, to help us see visions, but not the intellectual part, so it cannot lead us back to God. Porphyry thinks that theurgy is needed only by those who lack intellectual facility. Augustine complains that it gains more clients for his priests than for his philosophers.

(4) Porphyry *de Regressu Animae,* with comments by Augustine, *City of God* 10.9 Dombart and Kalb *CCL* 47, lines 13-35 (*de Regressu Animae* Bidez fr. 2, 27,21-28,19; includes Porphyry fr. 290F Smith)

Porphyry too, though hesitantly and with an almost shamefaced discussion promises a certain quasi-purification of the soul by theurgy, but denies that this art can offer anyone return to God. So you can see that he wavers, with alternating opinions, between the vice of sacrilegious curiosity (*curiositas*) and the profession of philosophy. At one moment he warns that this art should be avoided as being deceptive, dangerous in use and forbidden by the laws; at another, as if yielding to its supporters, he says it is useful for cleansing part of the soul, not indeed the intellectual part which grasps the truth of the intelligibles that have no resemblance to bodies, but the pneumatic (*spiritalis*) part, which receives the images (*imagines* = Greek *phantasiai*) of corporeal things. For this part, he says, by certain theurgic consecrations which they call *teletai* (rites), is made suitable and fit for the reception of spirits and angels and for seeing gods. But he acknowledges that from these theurgic rites no purification reaches the intellectual soul to make it suitable for seeing its God and for perceiving that which truly exists. From this it can be understood what vision of what gods he says is achieved by theurgic (*theurgicus*) consecration, a vision in which that which truly exists is not seen. Finally, he says that the rational or, as he

prefers to call it, the intellectual soul can escape to its own, even if its pneumatic part has not been purified by any theurgic art. GC

(5) Porphyry *de Regressu Animae*, with comments by Augustine *City of God* 10.27 Dombart and Kalb *CCL* 47, lines 8-25 (cf. *de Regressu Animae* Bidez fr. 4, 32,5-21; Porphyry fr. 287F Smith)

You [Porphyry] learnt this not from Plato, but from your Chaldaean masters, so as to extol human vices to aetherial or empyrean heights of the universe and heavenly firmaments, and enable your gods to announce divine messages to theurgists (*theurgi*). You make yourself, however, superior to these divine things in virtue of the intellectual way of life, on the grounds evidently that to you as a philosopher purifications by the theurgic art are in no way necessary. But for others you introduce those purifications, so as to give your masters the recompense, as it were, of seducing those who cannot philosophise to practices which you confess are useless to you, since you are capable of higher things. This is evidently so that whoever are distant from philosophical excellence, which is too arduous and only for a few, may with your authority seek theurgical people to purify them, not indeed in their intellectual souls, but at least in their pneumatic souls. The result is that, since the number of those who are put off by philosophising is incomparably greater, more people are forced to come to your secret and illicit masters than to the Platonist schools. RRKS

Anne Sheppard has suggested that Syrianus, as reflected in Hermeias' commentary on Plato's *Phaedrus*, may have distinguished three levels of theurgy, a lowest level (99,14-19), a middle level which does not bring you all the way to mystical union with the gods, and then an erotic madness which does bring you all the way (92,10-27). She suggests that the last may be a kind of theurgy, but not one involving ritual.

(6) Hermeias *in Phaedr.* 89,20-90,2 Couvreur

The disorder of its parts, that which has fallen into indeterminateness and disharmony and is filled with utter disorder is brought to concord and harmony by music. The art of initiation (*telestikê*) makes the soul complete and whole and prepares it for intellectual activity. For music harmonises and arranges the parts alone, whereas the art of initiation makes the soul complete and whole and prepares it *to be active* as a whole. So also its intellectual part will be active. For when the soul has descended it looks as if it has been broken in pieces and impaired, and the circle [the reference is to the two circuits of the soul in Plato *Timaeus* 36B-D] of the Same – that is its intellectual part – is shackled, while the circle of the Different – that is its doxastic part – is broken and twisted in many places. Then the soul is active in a partial way and not with its whole self. Now, after the harmonious fitting together of the parts, the Dionysian inspiration (*katokokhê*) brings the soul to full completion and makes it be active with its

whole self and live an intellectual life. The inspiration by Apollo takes all the pluralised powers of the soul and turns them, and the soul as a whole, back upon the 'one' of the soul itself and wakes up the soul (therefore he is called Apollo, as leading the soul back upwards, from the multiplicity towards the one). The inspiration of Eros, finally, takes over the unified soul and joins this 'one' of the soul with the gods and the intelligible beauty. JO

(7) Hermeias *in Phaedr.* 92,10-27 Couvreur

Why, asks [Proclus], do we, who always put the art of initiation (*telestikê*) before all of our other occupations and even maintain that it surpasses human philosophy itself, now make it inferior to divination as well as to the art of love (*erôtikê*)? Perhaps we put it first among the affairs of human life but not also among those of soul in itself. Still, why is it not the same with the outside as with the inside? For we used to say that there is an analogy of the inside to the outside. Perhaps the outside has an analogy to the inside in some respect, but not in another? Indeed, the art of initiation is put before all the other arts because it also possesses all the others combined (indeed, including theology, the whole of philosophy, and the art of love, of course; for it needs to cling to them with great desire, in order for it to be successful as well). As to the art of love, we first restrict it to its external aspect and then discuss this separately; looked at from this perspective it appears to us to be inferior to the art of initiation. Indeed, if you discuss the others separately from the art of initiation, you will see that they are much inferior to it. One should not compare analogies in all respects, but only in so far as they are being applied. For instance, suppose one used figures whose surfaces are analogous, but not their perimeters: the analogy will not be valid in all respects, then. JO

(8) Hermeias *in Phaedr.* 99,14-19 Couvreur

Yet also in the case of initiation, there exists a human and technical form which dresses up as [inspired initiation]; such is the art of initiation used also by priests with respect to the cult of statues in accordance with the law of the city and their specific ancestral customs. Spells and healings through plants or stones would belong to the technical art of initiation. Did Plato, then, not mention it because he thought that it was obvious – for there is much of this in the cities – or did he leave it out because he considered it an art that does not accomplish much? Or is it the case that even if it accomplishes something it does so by virtue of the original inspiration? For the arts that put on the clothes of others bear the images of the true causes. JO

Proclus allows that we are joined to the primordial causes, some through erotic madness, some through divine philosophy and some through theurgic power which

is better than any human science, as Damascius agrees, speaking of Orphic and Chaldaean wisdom, *Philosophical History* 85A Athanassiadi, and as faith (*pistis*) is said by Proclus a few pages earlier, 110,9-16, to be better than knowledge, translated in **18(d)** below.

(9) Proclus *PT* 1.25, 113,1-10 Saffrey-Westerink

To put it briefly, the three characteristics that complete the divine beings and that proceed through all the divine kinds, are goodness, wisdom, and beauty. Three further characteristics, bringing together the (divine) beings that are being filled (by the first triad), are second to the higher characteristics, but pervade all the divine worlds throughout. They are faith and truth and love. Everything is saved through them and is connected to the primordial causes, some through erotic madness, some through divine philosophy, some through theurgic power, which is better than any human wisdom and science and combines the blessings of divination and the cathartic powers of the performances of rites and simply all the accomplishments of divine possession. JO

When Proclus says that theurgy reaches only to a point among the intelligible gods, not to the unknowable realms of the intelligible, the reason he gives in *in Crat.* sec. 71, in a passage which immediately follows the account of secret marks translated below, is that the highest God, the One, has no name – such is the power of names. Sheppard nonetheless suggests that this restriction on theurgic power may apply only to the lower forms of theurgy. For Proclus' recourse to 'analogy', see Opsomer.

(10) Proclus *in Crat.* 71 32,18-33,4 Pasquali

Not the whole race of the gods can be named. None other than Parmenides reminded us that He who is beyond the beings as a whole is ineffable. Of Him there are no names, he says, nor any account. Of the intelligible gods, the very first kinds, which are united with the One itself and are called hidden, have a high degree of unknowability and ineffability. For the completely ineffable does not border on that which is entirely apparent and effable. No, it was necessary that the procession of the intelligibles be terminated at the latter order. So it is there that is situated the first thing that is effable and can be called by proper names. For there also, in accordance with the first forms, the intellective nature of the intelligibles shone forth. Everything that precedes this is silent and hidden and only knowable by intuition (*noêsis*). And that is the reason why all art of telestic rites (*telestikê*) ascends all the way up to this order, operating in a theurgic way. Indeed, Orpheus as well says that this order is the first to be called by name by the other gods, as the light that goes out from it reveals it to the intellective gods, making it knowable to them and nameable. JO

(11) Proclus *in Crat.* 113 65,16-26 Pasquali

Some characterise the supracelestial place, to which also Ouranos extends his own intellective life, with ineffable symbols, whereas others, though having named it, had to leave it (in fact) unknowable, completely incapable as they were of naming a genus, figure, or form for it. Proceeding even higher than this level they have been able to designate by name alone the limit of the intelligible gods, while they only indicate through analogy the beings beyond that, as those beings are ineffable and incomprehensible. This is because even at the level of the intelligibles themselves, of all the gods only the one that closes the world of the fathers, is said to be nameable among the wise, and theurgy ascends all the way up to this level. JO

Iamblichus speaks as if theurgy leads to union with the Demiurge of Plato's *Timaeus*, who is distinguished in Proclus *in Tim.* 1.310,15-24, following Syrianus, translated in **Physics 8(e)**, from lower demiurgic powers as creating universal things in a universal way (*holôn holikôs*). His universal creation excludes the creation of particular tripartite human souls by the lesser gods. See Jan Opsomer, 'Proclus on demiurgy and procession: a Neoplatonic reading of the *Timaeus*', in M.R. Wright, ed., *Essays on Plato's Timaeus*, London 2000, 113-43 at 119-23. Cf. above Proclus *in Tim.* 3.37,23, translated in **8(b)** and **12(c)** and Iamblichus in the next passage; Philoponus *in Phys.* 191,11-16; *in GC* 169,4-27, translated in **6(a)**; Proclus *in Tim.* 1.322,20-4, translated in **3(l)**. But often *hola* can simply mean 'all'.

(12) Iamblichus *Myst.* 10.6, 292,5-9 Des Places

When [theurgy] has attached (*sunaptein*) the soul one by one to each portion of the universe, and to the universal divine powers which penetrate those portions, then it leads the soul to the universal Demiurge and sets it beside him and makes it, free of all matter, to be unified (*sunênômenê*) with the eternal reason on its own. RRKS

Porphyry's *Letter to Anebo* asked why theurgists used meaningless (and foreign) names. Iamblichus replies that the gods' names are of the greatest importance in enabling us to go back up and attach ourselves to the gods. Proclus takes this as major evidence that divine names are natural, *in Crat.* secs 51-2; 71, but is more lenient about translating the names into Greek, 57 and 71, lines 75-82. Ammonius, however, follows Porphyry in thinking names to be the result of human agreement, and omits Proclus' contrary argument from the efficacy of divine names. He mentions in three lines, *in Int.* 38,23-6, an argument from the efficacy of *human* names in certain prayers and curses, but distances himself from it by attributing it to an Egyptian priest, Dousareios. This different attitude will have facilitated his rapprochement with the Christian authorities in Alexandria. On this see the Introduction above and on natural names **Logic and Metaphysics 7(d)**.

(13) Iamblichus *Myst* 7.4, 255,5-256,3 Des Places

[The method is] united (*sunênômenos*) to the gods. So that one must remove all [human] conceptions (*epinoiai*) and rational investigations from the

names of the gods, and remove the natural similarites in the voice to things in nature that are naturally conjoined to them. One must suppose in names the intellective and divine symbolical character-mark (*kharaktêr*) of divine likeness. And even if it is unknown to us, it is this that is most holy in the name. It is too great to be divided up for our own cognition. But in those cases where we have received the science of analysing [names], we have in the name knowledge of the divine essence and power and whole rank. And we keep in our soul all together the mystical and ineffable image (*eikôn*) of the gods and we lead our soul back up to the gods, and when it is led back up , as far as possible, we attach (*sunaptein*) it to the gods.

But [Porphyry also asks] why do we revere foreign signs above those of our own respective languages? There is a mystical reason for this too. Because the gods revealed that the whole language of the sacred races, such as the Assyrians and Egyptians, is suited to ritual, we therefore think that we should apply common terms also in the language which has kinship (*sungenês*) with the gods. RRKS

Proclus describes how both theurgy and our reversion to the gods depend on the fact that the gods implanted in us secret marks (*sunthêmata*) or symbols (*sumbola*) of their [the gods'] identities. These marks were also cited already by Iamblichus *ap.* Proclum *in Tim.* 1.209,1-212,6, to explain the efficacy of prayer; see **18(c)** below for translation.

(14) Proclus *in Crat.* 71 30,8-32,17 Pasquali

For, in instituting everything, the Fathers of everything (*ta hola*, see note to **18(b)**(11)) sowed signs (*sunthêmata*) and traces (*ikhnê*) of their own triadic essence in everything. Since even Nature instils a spark of its proper identity in bodies, a spark through which it both moves bodies and, if you will, 'steers from the stern' (Plato *Critias* 109C2), the Demiurge too established an image of his own monadic eminence in the universe, an image through which he guides the cosmos like a 'captain', says Plato, grasping 'rudders and tiller' (*Polit.* 272E). Indeed, these rudders and the tiller of the universe, by controlling which the Demiurge organises the universe, should be considered nothing else but symbols (*sumbola*) of the creation as a whole, which are difficult for us to comprehend but known and apparent to the gods themselves. But why discuss these matters?

[30,19] Of the universal cause, however, which is ineffable and beyond the intelligible realm, everything that exists even down to the lowest region possesses a sign (*sunthêma*) through which all things are attached to that cause – some further, some closer, according to the distinctness and the obscurity of the sign in them. And this is what moves everything to the longing for the Good and presents beings with this desire which cannot be quenched. While the sign is unknowable (for it has come down even to those who are not able to know it), it is greater than life (for it is present even to those without souls) and does not have the intellective (*noera*) power (for it is innate in objects not endowed with thinking). Thus, just as

Nature, the demiurgic monad, and the absolute Father himself who is removed from all things, sowed signs (*sunthêmata*) of their [the gods'] individual identity (*oikeia idiotês*) in things subsequent to them, and through these signs turn everything back to themselves, so too all the gods instil in the things produced from themselves symbols of their cause, and through these they settle all things in themselves. Therefore, the qualities of the substance of the loftier things which are sown into subsequent things are ineffable and unknowable signs (*sunthêmata*), and their active and mobile aspect surpasses all intellection.

[31,8] Such, then, are the characteristics of the light through which the gods appear to their own offspring. For these characteristics exist in a unified way in the gods themselves, but manifest themselves in the genera greater than ours, while they reach us in the mode of spatial distinction (*meristôs*) and [physical] shape. On that account, the gods advise us to contemplate 'the extended shape of light' (*Or. Chald.* 145). For existing above without shape, it became shaped through its procession. And while there it is established occultly and unitarily, it manifests itself to us in motion from the gods themselves. This light has its active aspect because of its divine cause, but its figured aspect because of the essence which receives it. But the things, in turn, which are illuminated from their powers are somehow intermediate between the ineffable and the effable. For they have themselves come through all the genera between (indeed it was not possible that the primordial gifts of the gods should reach us without the genera greater than ours much earlier participating in the illumination thence), and they exist in a manner proper to each level of being and reveal in a manner coordinate to everything the powers of those that instituted them. Such are the so-called symbols (*sumbola*) of the gods. They are uniform in the superior orders but multiform in the inferior. Imitating these symbols, theurgy too produces them through uttered, though inarticulate, expressions (*ekphonêseis adiarthrôtai*).

[31,28] The third type of property, which has come from the intellective level of being to all things and proceeds all the way to us, is the divine names, through which the gods are called and by which they are hymned (*anhumneisthai*). They have been revealed from the gods themselves, cause reversion back to them, and to the extent that they are manifest, lead to human understanding. For through these names we are able both to indicate something to each other concerning the gods and to converse with ourselves. Different peoples partake of these names in different ways: the Egyptians, for instance, have taken such names from the gods in accordance with their native tongue, but the Chaldeans and Indians have taken their own differently in accordance with their own languages, and in the same way the Greeks have taken theirs in accordance with their own dialect. Thus, even if the Greeks, with divine guidance, call a certain god 'Briareus' while the Chaldeans call him something else, we must suppose that both names are products of the gods and indicate the [same] essence. And it is no wonder if some names are more powerful, and others are less

so, since the daemonic and angelic names are more powerful than those that have become known to us, and in general those that are closer to the objects named are more perfect than those ranked further away. That, then, is what we have to say about how names range throughout all things and what essence they have been allotted. BD

Iamblichus recognises the priests' theurgic virtue as the highest level of virtue there is (see **17(a)** above).

It is part of Iamblichus' view that theurgy, sacrifice and prayer depend on divine help and action, in other words, grace. See Iamblichus *Myst.* 1.12, 41,6; 5.10, 211,13; and *ap.* Proclum *in Tim.* 1.211,6, for the idea taken from Plato *Tim.* 29E2 of God as ungrudging (*aphthonos*) and for the slightly different concept of propitiousness (*hileos*), the counterpart of propitiation (*exilasis*). These are translated under **18(a)** above and **(c)** below, as is Proclus *in Tim.* 1.216,18 on the need to give thanks for the ability to pray. Theurgy is taken as the work of the gods, not a work by us on them. But it had been equally recognised by Plotinus that your own intellectual activity does not bring you all the way to mystical union. You have to wait, as for the sunrise, for a god who may or may not come. And Augustine notes that Porphyry too recognises the need for grace (*gratia*) when he says that it is conceded (*concessum*) to only a few to reach God by the power of their intellect, *City of God* 10.29 translated in **Logic and Metaphysics 14(c)**.

(15) Plotinus 5.5 [32] 8 (3-7)

We should not pursue [the vision of the good] but remain quietly until it appears, preparing ourselves to be its spectator – just as the eye awaits the rising of the sun, which appears over the horizon (or from Oceanus, as the poets say) and displays itself to our gaze. BF

(16) Plotinus 5.3 [49] 17 (28-31)

It is when the soul has suddenly caught the light that we must believe that we have seen. For this comes from the One and is the One. It is then that we should think that the One is present when like another god it comes to illuminate the house of the one who called him. BF

(17) Porphyry *de Regressu Animae* with comments by Augustine *City of God* 10.29 Dombart and Kalb *CCL* 47, lines 11-20 (*de Regressu Animae* Bidez fr. 10, 37,11-21; Porphyry fr. 297F Smith)

Yet you acknowledge Grace (*gratia*), since you say it is granted (*concessum*) to few to reach God by the strength of their intellect. You do not say 'few decided', or 'few wanted'. When you say it is granted, you are doubtless acknowledging the Grace of God. You even use this word ['Grace'] quite openly, when you follow Plato's opinion and have no doubt that in this life humans in no way reach perfection of wisdom, but that after this life all that is missing can be supplied to those who live according to intellect according to the Providence of God and Grace. RRKS

(18) Iamblichus *Myst.* 3.20, 149,4-7 Des Places

If we even seem to be capable of doing anything at all, by participating and being illuminated by the gods, it is by this alone that we enjoy divine activity. Hence it is not the soul that possesses its own virtue and wisdom that shares in divine deeds. RRKS

Pseudo-Dionysius describes the Christian sacrament as theurgy:

(19) pseudo-Dionysius *Letter* 9.1, *PG* 3, 1105D-1108A

And in fact not even with regard to the sacramental rites (*teletai*) of the holiest mysteries [(*mustêria*) i.e. sacraments], do those initiated in holy things, the priests of our [Christian] tradition or of the tradition under the law, refrain from symbols which are appropriate to the divine. Not only this, but also we see the all-holy angels bringing forth divine things mystically by means of enigmas, and Jesus himself speaking about God in parables, handing down the theurgic (*theourga*) mysteries by means of the symbolic (*tupikos*) furnishing of a table. DGR

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18(c) Prayer

Plotinus explains how ordinary prayer works. The gifts are bestowed not knowingly (by *proairesis*) (similarly 4.4 [28] 40 (27), translated in **18(e)** below), but by means of sympathy among the parts of the living universe, although the mystic's communion with the One is also recognised in 5.1 [10] 6 as a kind of prayer. Iamblichus answers Porphyry's worries (how would intellectual beings hear our speech, and would petition not be alien to them?). Then, as reported by Proclus, he rejects Plotinus' appeal to sympathy and offers a characteristic higher theory that

when we are created by the gods, they leave a mark of affiliation (*sumbolon* or *sunthêma oikeiotêtos*) to their own identities in our souls and this mark attracts the good will of the gods and enables us to return to them. Prayer unites us with these marks. But Iamblichus *Myst.* 5.26 distinguishes three levels of prayer giving us contact, communion, or unification with God. Proclus also describes these marks as essential to reversion and to theurgy, *in Crat.* sec. 71, translated under *Theurgy* above. He also describes how each thing worships according to its own ability and even a plant, the heliotrope, can worship.

(1) Plotinus 4.4 [28] 42 (1-16)

So the stars will not need memory or perception of anything sent up to them for this purpose [answering prayer], which is the reason why we undertook this investigation. They do not choose (*proairetikos*) to assent to prayers in the way that some think they do. But it must be allowed that something does come from them regardless of prayers, in that they are parts of one whole. There are many powers, for example in a single living creature, and these operate regardless of choice, either without contrivance or as the outcome of some art; one part is helped or harmed by another just by being what they are by nature; one part is compelled by the skill of the doctor or soothsayer to give some of its power to another. In just the same way the whole universe gives to its parts, either of its own accord or when someone [magically] attracts something to one of its parts. It is disposed to its parts by its own nature; thus the person making the request is no alien, and even if he is evil, we should not be surprised since even the evil draw water from rivers. The giver (*to didon*) does not know to whom he is giving (*didôsin*) – he simply gives. BF

(2) Plotinus 4.4 [28] 38 (1-7)

Some things stem from [the heavens] unprompted as a result of its other life; others come into being on the promptings of something other than themselves, for example by prayers (either simply spoken or ritually incanted); none of these things is to be individually attributed to the heavens, but to the nature of the thing accomplished. Whatever promotes life or some other benefit is to be attributed to the gift (*dosis*) [of the heavens], as something proceeding from the greater to the lesser member. BF

(3) Iamblichus *Myst.* 1.15, 46,10-48,13 Des Places

So then, after declaring that pure intellects are 'unbending and not mingled with the sensible realm', you [Porphyry] raise the question as to whether it is proper to pray to them. For my part, I would hold the view that it is not proper to pray to any others than these. For that element in us which is divine and intellectual and one – or, if you so wish to term it, intelligible – is aroused then manifestly in prayer, and when aroused, strives primarily towards what is like to itself, and joins itself to essential perfection. And if it seems to you incredible that the incorporeal should

hear a voice, and that what we utter in prayer should have need of a further sense organ, and specifically of ears, you are deliberately forgetting the facility of the primary causes for knowing and comprehending within themselves all that is inferior to them; for they embrace in unity within themselves all beings together. So then, it is neither through faculties nor through organs that the gods receive into themselves our prayers, but rather they embrace within themselves the realisations of the words of good men, and in particular of those which, by virtue of the sacred liturgy, are established within the gods and united to them; for in that case the divine is literally united with itself, and it is not in the way of one person addressing another that it participates in the thought expressed by the prayers.

[47,12] 'But prayers of petition (*litaneiai*)', you say, 'are alien and not for presentation to the purity of the intellect.' Not so; for by reason of this very circumstance, that we are inferior to the gods in power and in purity and all other respects, it is eminently suitable that we entreat them to the greatest degree possible. The consciousness of our own nothingness, if one judges it in comparison with the gods, makes us naturally turn to supplications; and by the practice of supplication we are raised little by little to the level of the object of our supplication, and we gain likeness to it by virtue of our constant consorting with it, and, starting from our own imperfection, we gradually take on the perfection of the divine. And if one were to consider also how the hieratic prayer-formulae have been sent down to men by the gods themselves, and that they are the symbols of the gods themselves, and not known to anyone but them, and that in a way they possess the same power as the gods themselves, how could one any longer justly believe that such a procedure of supplication is derived from the sense-world, and is not divine and intellectual? Or how could any element of passion (*pathos*) be reasonably insinuated into this activity, seeing that not even a virtuous human character can easily be brought to the requisite level of purity? JD

(4) Iamblichus *Myst.* 5.26, 237,16-238,6 Des Places

I declare, then, that the first degree of prayer is the introductory, which leads to contact (*sunaphê*) and acquaintance with the divine; the second is conjunctive, producing a communion of sympathetic minds (*koinônia homonoêtikê*), and calling forth benefactions sent down from the gods even before we express our requests, while achieving whole courses of action even before we think of them; the most perfect, finally, has as its mark ineffable unification (*henôsis*), which establishes all authority in the gods, and provides that our souls rest completely in them. JD

(5) Iamblichus *ap.* Proclum *in Tim.* 1.209,1-212,6 Diehl

But the divine Iamblichus thinks that such an inquiry is not at all suited to the purpose; for the account given by Plato is not now about godless

persons, but about those who behave properly and are able to associate with the gods; and not about those who dispute the works of holiness but about those who can be saved by the forces that preserve the whole. He gives an account of the power of prayer and of its culmination, which is something amazing, overwhelming, exceeding all expectation.

[209,9] It is appropriate for us to adapt the account so that it becomes more familiar to our hearers and easier to understand, and to make his [Iamblichus'] intentions clear while rendering his discussion of prayer in harmony with Plato. Here is where we begin.

[209,13] 'All things that exist are offspring of gods, and everything is directly produced by them and founded within them. For not only is there a continuous procession of things being brought to fulfilment, as the next things depend on causes which immediately precede them, but there is also a way in which everything is born straight from the gods themselves – even if they are said to be at the furthest remove from the gods, and even if you speak of matter itself. For the divine is separated from nothing; it is present to all things on an equal basis. Hence even if you take things at the furthest remove, you will find that even here the divine is present. For the one is everywhere, insofar as each of the existent things is dependent upon gods, but as things proceed from the gods they do not pass beyond their limits, but are rooted firmly in them. For where could they pass outside to, when the gods embrace them, and have prior claim over them, and hold them within themselves? For what is beyond the gods is what in no way exists. All existing things are enfolded by the gods in a circle, and are inside them. So in some miraculous way all things have both proceeded (*proelthein*) and have not proceeded. For they have not been wrenched from the gods; nor could they exist if they had been wrenched away, because all offspring that are wrenched from their fathers immediately slip away into the empty expanse of not-being; [210] but they are somehow founded among them, and, to sum up, they have proceeded by themselves but they remain with the gods. Since they must proceed and turn back again in imitation of the epiphany of the gods and their reversion to their cause, so that, in accord with the triad of fulfilment, these things too might in due order be embraced again by the gods and the first henads, they receive a second perfection from them, through which they can revert to the goodness of the gods, so that, after being rooted among the gods in the beginning, they may again come to rest among them through their reversion, making this into a kind of circle that begins with the gods and ends in the gods. So everything both remains with and reverts to the gods, getting this power from them, and accepting a double encoded role as part of their nature, one of remaining there, and the other of reverting after proceeding.

[210,14] And it is possible to observe this not in souls alone, but also in the inanimate things that follow. For what else is it, that implants in these things too their power of interacting 'sympathetically' with these powers or those, other than that they have acquired tokens (*sumbola*) from nature,

some affiliating (*oikeioun*) them to one chain of gods, and others to another. For nature, with its foundation on high and among the gods themselves, and distributed around the ranks of the gods, implants in bodies too codes of affiliation (*oikeiotêtos sunthêmata*) with their gods, in some Sun-codes, in others Moon-codes, in others codes for another of the gods. She causes these things too to revert to the gods, some quite simply to the gods, others to these particular gods, bringing her offspring to fulfilment in a manner that is special (*kat' idiotêta*) to one or another group of gods. Much earlier did the Demiurge put these principles into operation in souls, giving them programmatic codes (*sunthêmata*) for remaining fixed and for reverting, fixing them in accord with the One, and favouring them with reversion in accord with intellect. With a view to this reversion prayer offers the most perfect union [211] with the unutterable symbols (*sumbola arrêta*) of the gods, which the father of souls has sowed into them [souls]. It draws into itself the beneficence of the gods, it unites those who pray with those to whom they pray, it actually joins the intellect of the gods with the words of those who pray, and it activates the will (*boulêsis*) of those who perfectly embrace good things so that they ungrudgingly (*aphthonos*) grant a share in them. It is a 'worker of persuasion' – divine persuasion – and places all that is ours in the lap of the gods. Perfect and genuine prayer is led firstly by knowledge of all the divine orders whom the one who prays approaches. For he could not adopt the correct approach if he had not learnt their [the gods'] distinctive characteristics (*idiotêtes*). Hence the oracle has charged that the 'concept warm with fire [cf. *Chaldean Oracles* 56]' should have first rank in holy ritual. Second after this, in accordance with our assimilation (*homoiôsis*) [cf. Plato *Theaetetus* 176B; *Republic* 613B] to the divine, should come the fitting affiliation (*oikeiôsis*) of complete purity, holiness, culture, and orderliness, through which we offer what is ours to the gods, drawing good will from them and bowing our souls before them. Third is the contact, in which we touch divine being with the highest point of the soul, and incline towards (*sunneuein*) it. In addition to this there is 'coming into proximity' – that's what the oracle calls it:

> For mortal, coming into proximity by fire, shall have light from the gods [cf. *Chaldean Oracles* 53.55] bringing our association closer and brightening our share in the divine light.

[211,24] Finally there is the unification, locating the 'one' of the soul in the very 'One' of the gods, and making our own activity and that of the gods a single one, in accordance with which we belong not to ourselves but to the gods, remaining in the divine light which enfolds us in a circle. And this is the ideal limit of true prayer, where it joins reversion (*epistrophê*) with rest, and restores all that proceeds from the One of the gods to the one, and embraces the light within us with the light of the gods. So prayer is no small part of the overall ascent of souls, nor is the possessor of virtue beyond the need of the additional good things that come from prayer. Quite

the reverse is the case – the ascent is perfected through it and in company with it, and the pinnacle of virtue is holiness concerning the gods. HT

An Epicurean objection, that prayer would need to be preceded by an infinite regress of prayers, is answered by Porphyry and Proclus, the latter appealing to divine grace enabling us to pray. Compare Augustine's prevenient grace, *On Nature and Grace* 31,35.

(6) Proclus *in Tim.* 1.216,18-217,4

And how, says the Epicurean Hermarchus, do we not have an infinite regress if we need prayer to provide the impulse (*hormê*) for everything – even something of no consequence. For it is also the case that in order to pray we shall need another additional prayer, and there will be no end to the process. Should we solve the problem as Porphyry did? It has not been claimed that one needs to pray for every undertaking, but for the impulse for every undertaking. We have the impulse for undertakings, but we don't have the impulse for impulses, so the path does not involve infinite regress. Or does the problem still remain? For we do also have the impulse for prayer and so we will need again a prayer for this impulse, and yet another for the impulse to this, and so on to infinity.

[216,28] So it is a finer thing to claim that anybody who prays concerning any undertaking will first admit that he owes the gods thanks for this very thing – that he has been lucky enough to receive from them his reversion (*epistrophê*) to them. And that, while goodness belongs to other undertakings on account of prayer, prayer has it on its own account. So, because it has embraced the good within itself and provides a link with the divine, it will have no need of another prayer. HT

On worship by the heliotrope (cf. Iamblichus *Myst.* 5.18, under **18(a)** above).

(7) Proclus *On the Hieratic Art, Catalogue des manuscrits alchimiques grecs* 6 Bidez p. 148, 12-18

Each thing prays according to the rank it occupies, and sings the praise of the leader of the series to which it belongs intellectively, or discursively, or naturally, or perceptually. For the heliotrope moves to the extent that it is free to move, and in its rotation, if we could hear the sound of the air buffeted by its movement, we should be aware that it is a hymn to its king, so much as it is within the power of a plant to sing. SR

So far the quotations from Iamblichus and Proclus focus on prayer as bringing us to God. But Iamblichus does also recognise prayers for mundane favours. Similarly, under **18(a)** above we saw him in *Myst* 5.17 recognising that we could obtain favours concerning crop failure, sterility and property. But his point was that this was not achieved by sacrifice to immaterial gods, but by a ritual involving material objects and addressed to beings below the immaterial gods.

A different issue about prayer for favours, that we cannot make God *change* his will, is addressed by the Christian Origen, *On Prayer* 5-6. His reply is that God has *changelessly* willed that if we pray, there will be such-and-such a response. Cf. **Physics 9(c)** for Augustine and Philoponus on God *changelessly* willing something to begin.

Reading

John Dillon, 'Iamblichus' theory of prayer', in his *Iamblichi Chalcidiensis in Platonis dialogos commentariorum fragmenta*, Leiden 1973, Appendix A.

John Rist, *Plotinus. The Road to Reality*, Cambridge 1967, ch. 15, 'Prayer'.

18(d) Faith, truth, love and hope

Porphyry recommends these four rather Christian-sounding attitudes to his wife, Marcella, in the context of prayer, namely, faith, hope, passionate love (*erôs*) and truth. These attitudes come from the theurgical text *Chaldaean Oracles* (F. 45-8 Des Places, English tr. Ruth Majercik), and appear in the same context in Iamblichus in the passage on prayer very shortly after the lines just quoted, and we have also noticed the first three in Proclus' *Platonic Theology*, 1.25 in the context of theurgy (see **18(b)** above), where a whole chapter is devoted to them. Proclus adds there that faith is superior to knowledge. Under the influence of the *Chaldaean Oracles*, Proclus' commentary on the *First Alcibiades* converts the first three into metaphysical entities and theurgists are advised to unite themselves to God through this triad. Hope is added not only by Porphyry and Iamblichus, but by Proclus *in Tim.* 3.212,21-3 and Simplicius *in Phys.* 5,20 and it is given importance in Plato *Laws* 732C-D. Proclus cites the importance of trust in society in Plato's *Laws* 630C and 730C, and he could have added faith in the gods, 966C. By Simplicius these attitudes are recommended to the student of physics.

Hoffmann points out that Simplicius finds the idea of faith in Aristotle, when Aristotle says, *On the Heavens* 1.2, 269b13, that on the basis of his arguments (*sullogizomenos*) one could have faith (*pisteuein*) that there is a celestial fifth element, and 2.1, 283b26-284a2 that one can have faith (*pistis, sumpeithein heauton*) in the eternity of the universe and the traditional belief in this, both because of Aristotle's arguments and because of the failure of rival accounts, *in Cael.* 55,3-24; 370,3-16. In the latter passage, Simplicius says that after his proofs (*apodeixeis*) Aristotle cites traditional belief, as Plato expounds myths, in order to strengthen conviction (*pistis*).

Robin Lane Fox has drawn my attention to Augustine *Soliloquies* 4.9-12 (*CSEL* 89, pp. 15-21), which rejects the kind of knowledge of God available to Plato, Plotinus and the Stoics, insisting instead that the requisite knowledge involves faith, hope and charity (*fides, spes, caritas*). He would have found this desideratum, if he had by then known the relevant Porphyry, except that he does not emulate Porphyry's use of the word for passionate love (*erôs* in Greek – Proclus uses *philia*).

For a text that criticises hope, see Macrobius at **17(g)**(4), sec. 17 above.

(1) Porphyry *Letter to Marcella* 24, 289,17-24 Nauck

Four elements should prevail in our relationship to God: faith, truth, love (*erôs*), hope. For one must have faith that the only security is turning back to God; having faith, one must be as committed as is possible to knowing the truth about Him; knowing, one must love that which is known; loving,

one must nurture the soul on good hopes throughout life. For it is by good hopes that the good surpass the bad. GC

(2) Iamblichus *ap.* Proclum *in Tim.* 1.212,12-25 Diehl

So he who applies himself properly to prayer must make the gods gracious, stir up in himself the notions of the gods (for [to appreciate] the gentleness of the superior ones first launches us towards participation in them), and cling unflinchingly to the divine ritual. 'For with the mortal who delays, the blessed ones are swift [*Chaldaean Oracles* 56]'. He must keep the order of the divine operations unshaken and have set before himself (*proballein*) the virtues which purify us from the processes of coming into being and lead us upward, along with faith (*pistis*), truth (*alêtheia*) and love (*erôs*), this being that triad, and hope (*elpis*) of good things. He must set before himself unswerving his receptivity of the divine light, and adopt abstention from all other practices, in order that he may be with God, alone with the alone, and may not try to join himself to the One with a crowd. HT, RRKS

(3) Proclus *PT* 1.25, vol. 1, 111,25-113,10 Saffrey-Westerink

This then is the haven, unique and safe, of all beings and this is what is most trustworthy for all beings. And that is the reason, I think, why the contact and union with it is called faith by the theologians. And not the theologians alone, but also, if it is allowed to express my view, none other than Plato in the *Laws* has proclaimed the kinship of this faith with truth as well as love (*erôs*). Yet most people do not notice that he has in mind these things, as he is discussing their contraries, establishing the identity of the deficiencies with respect to this triad. He indeed states this clearly when he says that the lover of lies is not to be trusted, and the person that is not to be trusted has no friends. Hence it is also necessary that the lover of truth can be trusted and that the person that can be trusted is well-adjusted to friendship. Let us then, starting from here, examine what truth is and faith and love, and let us try to grasp by the very power of reasoning this one and single communion. But before this, we should remember, if you wish, that he calls faithfulness the virtue that reconciles those that are in conflict, and eliminates the greatest wars (I mean the civil wars in the cities), for it appears from what we have said that faith is the cause of unification, communion, and peace. And if this kind of power is found in us, it must be present *a fortiori* in the gods themselves. Indeed, just as Plato mentions some divine wisdom and justice, and science, how could also faith not exist with the gods, which unites the whole world of virtues?

[113,10] To put it briefly, the three characteristics that complete the divine beings and that proceed through all the divine kinds, are goodness, wisdom, and beauty. Three further characteristics, bringing together the (divine) beings that are being filled (by the first triad), are second to the higher characteristics, but pervade all the divine worlds throughout. They

are faith and truth and love. Everything is saved through them and is connected to the primordial causes, some through erotic madness, some through divine philosophy, some through theurgic power, which is better than any human wisdom and science and combines the blessings of divination and the cathartic powers of the performances of rites and simply all the accomplishments of divine possession. JO

(4) Proclus *in Alc. 1*, 51,13-52,2 Westerink

And there are three monads that subsist in accordance with these intelligible causes, existing causally and unitarily in the intelligible, but revealing themselves for the first time in the unspeakable order of the gods, namely faith and truth and love (*erôs*); the first founding everything there is and establishing it in the good, the second revealing the knowledge that lies in all beings, the third leading back everything and joining it with the nature of the beautiful. JO

(5) Proclus *in Alc. 1*, 52,10-53,2 Westerink

So love travels from the intelligibles above to what is within the cosmos, making everything revert to divine beauty, and truth illuminates wholes with knowledge and faith establishes each being in the good. For all things, says the oracle, are governed and exist in these three. And this is the reason why the gods advise the theurgists that through this triad they unite themselves to god. JO

(6) Proclus *in Parm.* 927,18-29

There are three things, then, which he says are required by anyone embarking on the study of the intelligible nature – natural ability, experience, and enthusiasm. Natural ability will naturally endow him with faith in the divine, experience will enable him to hold fast to the truth of paradoxical doctrines, and his enthusiasm will stir up in him a love (*erôtikon*) of this study, that in this sphere of activity also there may be Faith, Truth, and Love (*erôs*), those three qualities that save souls through the natural suitability which joins one to them. And, if you like, through experience he will acquire receptivity in the cognitive part of his soul, while through enthusiasm he will gain an intensification of the vital part, directed towards the intelligibles, and through natural excellence the pre-existing basis for both these, since right from birth all these qualities have been granted to him. So the prospective student should be of this nature, and have a character made up of this triad of qualities. GM, JD

(7) Simplicius *in Phys.* 5,16-20

Again [the study of Physics] does most to foment awe at God's transcen-

dence. Through an exact understanding of what he brings about, it awakens us in a glorious way to the wondrousness and majesty of the producer. And upon this wonder there follow a secure concord (*sumpatheia*) with God and faith (*pistis*) and hope (*elpis*). That is the chief reason for pursuing the study of Physics. RRKS

(8) Simplicius *in Cael.* 55,13-24

It is better, I believe, to say that while he [Aristotle *Cael* 269b13] urges us in all cases to supplement demonstrative necessities with the sympathy (*sumpatheia*) derived from faith (*pistis*), [he does so] particularly in the case of arguments concerning things divine, since it not only provides confirmation of true knowledge when it supervenes upon demonstration, but also unification (*henôsis*) with what is knowable, which is the goal of human blessedness (*makariotês*). For while the upward-leading love (*erôs*) which arouses the desire for divine beauty exists already in the soul, the true revelation of it follows for the worthy, and for them faith orchestrates a firm grounding in it and a unification with it. For it is self-evident that however far removed in space the heavens are from the realm of generation and destruction, they exceed it all the more in the worth of their substance. And while these things are the furthest removed at the extreme of the universe, the heaven is endowed with the highest bodily form. RJH

(9) Simplicius *in Cael.* 370, 8-16

And now again after the demonstrations (*apodeixeis*) he adds the testimony of the ancient accounts of our forefathers, to strengthen conviction (*pistis*). He produces the arguments from received opinions before the demonstrations as being briefer and tauter accounts leading to the demonstrations, but he implants a suspicion of faulty reasoning and inability to demonstrate. By contrast, arguments of this sort after the demonstrations make conviction (*pistis*) derived from the demonstrations simultaneously more secure and more ingrained (*sumpathesteros*). And that is why Aristotle used [arguments of this sort] both before the demonstrations and after them, while Plato used to hand down myths after his demonstrations. RRKS

(10) Proclus *Platonic Theology* 1.25, 110,9-16 Saffrey-Westerink

We must seek the good not by way of knowledge (*gnôstikôs*) and imperfectly, but by seeing ourselves in the divine light and shutting our eyes and so stationing ourselves in the unknown and hidden unity of beings. For that kind of faith (*pistis*) is superior to the operation of knowledge not only in us, but also with the gods themselves. In respect of it all the gods are united and gather all their powers and processions in a single form around one centre. RRKS

Reading

Polymnia Athanassiadi, 'The Chaldaean Oracles: theology and theurgy', in Polymnia Athanassiadi, Michael Frede, eds, *Pagan Monotheism in Late Antiquity*, Oxford 1999, ch. 5.

Philippe Hoffmann, 'La triade Chaldaïque *erôs, alêtheia, pistis*: de Proclus à Simplicius', in A.Ph. Segonds, C. Steel, eds, *Proclus et la théologie Platonicienne*, Leuven, Paris 2000, 459-89.

H. Lewy, *Chaldaean Oracles and Theurgy*, Paris 1978, 144-8.

William O'Neill, *Proclus: Alcibiades 1. A Translation and Commentary*, at pp. 51-2.

John Rist, *Plotinus: The Road to Reality*, Cambridge 1967, 237-46.

Anne Sheppard, 'Proclus' attitude to theurgy', *Classical Quarterly* 32, 1982, 212-24.

18(e) Erotic magic is not due to the gods

Plotinus and Iamblichus agree that erotic magic works through human art exploiting the natural sympathy in the universe. Plotinus adds that it is a sign that in a way all souls are one. Porphyry *Abstinence* 2.42, translated in **18(f)** below, thinks that bad daemons encourage people to use love-philtres, but his *Letter to Anebo* (cf. Porphyry *Abstinence* 4.2.1) expresses great anxiety that the Egyptian religion supposes the gods or daemons can be brought to do immoral things by immoral inducements. Iamblichus *Myst.* replies that erotic magic is merely a human art which abuses natural sympathy.

(1) Plotinus 4.4 [28] 30 (8-12)

This involves problems which are considerable in themselves and which trouble those who cannot accept that the gods are partly or fully responsible for strange occurrences, especially with regard to acts of love and immoral sexual intercourse. BF

(2) Plotinus 4.4 [28] 40 (1-32)

How do spells work?

Well, they act by sympathy, because there is a natural harmony among like things and a discord among unlike, and because there is a diversity among the powers of the many things which combine to form the single living creature. In fact even if there is no external agent contriving it, many things feel the force of attraction and bewitchment. True magic is the 'Love and Strife' in the universe; this is the primal 'magician and sorcerer'; men pay heed to him and use his potions and spells on each other. In fact because things naturally feel love and the force of love draws them towards each other, the power of the erotic arts which work through sorcery has come into being; men apply by contact different substances, which contain a distillation of love itself, to suit different natures. They bring one soul into contact with another just as if they were training two separate plants to grow together. They use formulae that contain powers, and by adopting a posture to match these formulae they secretly attract to themselves forces, since they are in the one universe which works towards the one goal.

For if one were to place such a sorcerer outside the universe, he would be unable to exert any upward or downward attraction by means of incantations and spells. As it is, because his influence is not from outside (as if that were possible!), he can exert a force knowing how one part of the living universe is attracted towards another. This influence is naturally based on incantations – tunes, particular intonations and the stance of the sorcerer – in just the way that certain pitiable postures and utterances have some attraction. It is the irrational soul, not any act of choice or reason, that is charmed by music. Such sorcery causes no surprise; in fact people love to be bewitched in this way, even if this is not what they require from musicians. Nor should one imagine that other sorts of prayer are heard by a deliberate choice (*proairesis*, cf. 4.4 [28] 42 (4) [translated under **18(c)** above]). For the powers that we try to appease in this way do not listen to our incantations; when a snake bewitches a man he has no consciousness or perception – he merely realises that it has happened when it has happened; even so his highest faculty is unaffected. But something comes to him or to someone else from the being that he prays to. BF

(3) Plotinus 4.9 [8] 3 (1-6)

In fact from a different viewpoint the account tells us that we are in sympathy with each other and that we share someone's pain and elation just from seeing them, and that we are naturally attracted into a loving relationship – perhaps this is the very cause of love. If spells and other wizardry draw us together and put us in sympathy with each other at a distance, then this is unequivocally caused by the one soul. BF

(4) Porphyry *Letter to Anebo ap.* Augustinum *City of God* 10.11 Dombart and Kalb *CCL* 47, lines 46-8 (= Porphyry *Letter to Anebo* p. 17 Sodano)

[Porphyry asks why] the powers will not hear out someone who prays while tainted by sex, when they themselves do not hesitate to lead anyone into illicit unions. RRKS

(5) Porphyry *Letter to Anebo ap.* Eusebium *PE* 5.10, 1-2, *GCS* 8.1, 242,15-243,1 Mras (= Porphyry *Letter to Anebo* pp. 18-20 Sodano)

I find it very disturbing that those who are invoked (*parakaleisthai*) as superiors are given orders as inferiors; that they require the worshipper to be just, but themselves consent to do unjust acts when they are told to; that they would not listen to the prayer of someone who is impure from sex, but themselves do not hesitate to conduct anyone to illicit sex. They say that their interpreters must abstain from animate creatures so as not to be defiled by vapours from bodies, but they themselves are lured especially by the vapours from sacrifices; and they say that their initiate must not be in

contact with dead bodies, but evocations (*theogôgiai*) of the gods are usually made with the dead bodies of animals. GC

(6) Iamblichus *Myst.* 4.11-13 Des Places

[11] You pose next a question which raises a problem, to wit, 'how can it be that the gods will not hearken to a petitioner who is impure by reason of sexual intercourse, but nonetheless they themselves do not shrink from leading those who are involved with them into unlawful sexual liaisons.' The answer to this should be obvious from what has just been said. Either these things happen outside the laws, but in accordance with a cause and order of things superior to the laws; or such things come about in accordance with the harmony and friendship obtaining in the cosmos, but (are distorted) by reason of an unsympathetic mixture in its parts; or, while the gift is correctly bestowed, it is perverted to a contrary effect by the receivers of it.

[12] One should, nevertheless, give a more particular examination to these very questions, how they come about and what may be their rationale. First of all, we must bear in mind that the universe is a single living being. The parts within it are spatially distinct, but strive towards each other by virtue of their single nature. The force of cohesion in the universe and the cause of their blending draws the parts naturally towards mingling with one another. This force, however, can be artificially aroused and intensified more than is proper. In and of itself this force, and that tension extending throughout the cosmos which derives from it, is good and a cause of fulfilment, co-ordinates community and union and symmetry, and by its unity introduces an indissoluble principle of love, dominating all things both that exist (eternally) and that come into being. At the level of the individual parts, however, by reason of their distinction from each other and the whole, and because according to their proper natures they are incomplete and non-self-sufficient and weak, their mutual contact is brought about with the accompaniment of emotion; for which reason it comes about that desire and an innate mutual attraction are present in the great majority of them. Seeing, then, this force thus implanted in nature and distributed throughout it, art, which is itself divided in many forms throughout nature, draws it in various ways and channels it; it brings to disorder that which was ordered of itself, fills the beauty and the symmetry of the forms with asymmetry and ugliness, and transfers the noble end associated with unity to another unseemly sort of fulfilment, a vulgar one, a union of disparate elements brought together somehow under the guidance of emotion. It provides from its own resources material which is unsuitable to the production of beauty, either being absolutely unreceptive of beauty, or such as to transform it into something else, and mixes in with it many disparate natural powers, by means of which it organises as it wishes unions for the purposes of generation. So then, on all counts, we can

show that it is from some human art that such contrivance of sexual union derives, and not from any compulsion originating from daemons or gods.

[13] Consider now, taking another type of causal process, how a stone, say, or a plant may often possess of itself a nature such as either to destroy or, conversely, to put together generated things; might perhaps this sort of natural power after all be present not only in such things as these, but also in superior natures, at higher levels of being, and lead those who are not able to reason clearly to attribute the activities of natural forces to the actions of higher powers? It has previously been agreed, after all, that it is in the realm of generation and in respect of human affairs and such as concern the earthly realm that the tribe of evil daemons has most power. How would it be surprising, then, if such a class of being performed such deeds as these? Indeed it is not everyone who could discern the good from the evil (among daemons), and by what characteristic signs one may distinguish either of them; but it is precisely by not being able to distinguish clearly between these that they come to improper conclusions in their search for the cause of these phenomena, and refer them to the classes of being superior to nature and to the rank of daemons. And if in addition certain powers of the individual soul are adduced in these cases as contributing to the achievement of a given result – a soul, that is, which is held in a body after the manner of one which has left behind the oyster-like and earthy body, but which still wanders about in the realms of generation mounted upon a murky and damp pneumatic [vehicle] – this view also would be true, but very far removed from imputing blame to the superior classes of being. In no way, then, is the divinity and the good variety of daemon at the service of the unlawful desires of men for sexual indulgence, since it has been shown that there are many other entities responsible for this. JD

18(f) Daemons

Daemons have pneumatic bodies and they can cause these to take shape by imprinting on them their own imaginings (*phantasiai*). But the bodies are not eternal. In bad daemons, they depend on the nourishment of libations and cooking smoke. This, as described by Porphyry *Abstinence* 2.39.1-3; *to Gaurus* 6.1, 42,5-12, has already been set out above, under **2(h)** and **8(b)**, but Iamblichus disagrees, *Myst.* 5.10, quoted under **18(a)** above, on the need for nutrition. For Porphyry see further *Abstinence* 2.42 below. Porphyry distinguishes good daemons and bad daemons. The good ones may look after animals and crops (see also **Physics 4(a)**). But bad daemons can only harm us, and sacrifices attract and sustain them, so can do harm, while in no way persuading them to do good. But Augustine reports Porphyry as being agnostic about bad daemons in the *Letter to Anebo*.

No daemons had been bad in Plato, but Plutarch reports bad daemons or other spirits in the third head of Plato's Academy Xenocrates and in many others, e.g. *On Isis and Osiris* 360F-370C. *The Chaldaean Oracles* and the Hermetic tradition also postulated bad daemons.

Christians themselves treated all demons (I use a different spelling) as bad (so St Augustine *City of God*, 9.19) and reserved the word 'angels' for the good.

Augustine and Porphyry agree that Platonist talk of lesser gods is equivalent to Christian talk of angels, Porphyry *Against the Christians* fr. 76 Harnack, Augustine *City of God* 9.23, both translated in **Logic and Metaphysics** 14. Proclus *On the Existence of Evils* defends daemons from the charge of being evil.

Despite his warnings, Porphyry expresses genuine doubts about how things work in his respectful questions about Egyptian practices in the *Letter to Anebo*, that was to be so savagely answered by the devout Iamblichus. Augustine preserves a relevant portion of the *Letter*.

For shooting stars as our personal daemons or intellects ascending or descending for reincarnation, see Plutarch *On the Daimon of Socrates* 591Dff.

(1) Porphyry *Abstinence* 2.38

But the concept of daemons is confused and leads to serious misrepresentation (*diabolê*), so it is necessary to give a rational analysis of their nature; for perhaps, (they say), it is necessary to show why people have gone astray about them. So the following distinction should be made. [2] All the souls which, having originated from the universal soul, administer large parts of the regions below the moon, resting on their *pneuma* but controlling it by reason, should be regarded as good daemons who do everything for the benefit of those they rule, whether they are in charge of certain animals, or of crops which have been assigned to them, or of what happens for the sake of these – showers of rain, moderate winds, fine weather, and the other things which work with them, and the balance of seasons within the year; or, again, for our sake they are in charge of skills, or of all kinds of education in the liberal arts, or of medicine and physical training and other such things. It is impossible for these daemons both to provide benefits and to cause harm to the same beings. [3] Among them must be numbered the 'transmitters', as Plato calls them, who report 'what comes from people to the gods and what comes from the gods to people', carrying up our prayers to the gods as if to judges, and carrying back to us their advice and warnings through oracles [cf. Plato *Symposium* 202E]. [4] But the souls which do not control the *pneuma* adjacent to them, but are mostly controlled by it, are for that very reason too much carried away, when the angers and appetites of the *pneuma* lead to impulse (*hormê*). These souls are also daemons, but may reasonably be called maleficent. GC

(2) Porphyry *Abstinence* 2.41

Literature, too, has further inflamed people's suppositions, by using discourse designed to shock (*ekplêxis*) and enchant, able to cast spells and to create belief in the most impossible things. But one must be firmly convinced that the good never harms and the bad never benefits. [2] As Plato says [*Republic* 335D], 'cooling is not done by heat but by its opposite', and similarly 'harm is not done by the just man'. Now the divine power must by nature be most just of all, or it would not be divine. So this [harmful] power, and this role, must be separated from the beneficent daemons, for

the power which is naturally and deliberately harmful is the opposite of the beneficent, and opposites can never occur in the same. [3] The maleficent daemons harass mortals in many respects, some of them important, but in every respect there is no way that the good daemons will neglect their own concerns: they forewarn, so far as they are able, of the dangers impending from the maleficent daemons, by revelations in dreams, or through an inspired soul, or in many other ways. [4] And everyone would know and take precautions, if he could distinguish the signs they send; for they send signs to everyone, but not everyone understands what the signs mean, just as not everyone can read what is written, but only the person who has learned letters. [5] But it is through the opposite kind of daemons that all sorcery is accomplished, for those who try to achieve bad things through sorcery honour especially these daemons and in particular their chief. GC

(3) Porphyry *Abstinence* 2.39.3-5

They allot more to their emotional part (*pathêtikon*), and there is no evil that they do not attempt to do to the regions around the earth. Their character is wholly violent and deceptive, and lacking the supervision of the greater divine power, so they usually make sudden intense onslaughts, like ambushes, sometimes trying to remain hidden and sometimes using force. So emotions which come from them are acute. [4] But healing and setting to rights, which are from the better daemons, seem slower, for every good thing is gentle and consistent, progressing in good order and not going beyond what is right. [5] If you think like this, it will never be possible for you to fall into the worst of absurdities: that is, supposing that there is bad in the good ones and good in the bad ones. This is not the only way in which the argument is absurd, but most people have acquired the most contemptible suppositions (*hupolêpseis*) even about the gods, and pass them on to others. GC

(4) Porphyry *Abstinence* 2.40.3

They rejoice in everything that is likewise inconsistent and incompatible; slipping on (as it were) the masks of the other gods, they profit from our lack of sense, winning over the masses because they inflame people's appetites with lust and longing for wealth and power and pleasure, and also with empty ambition (*kenodoxiai*) from which arises civil conflicts and wars and kindred events. GC

(5) Porphyry *Abstinence* 2.42-3

These daemons abound in images (*phantasia*) of all kinds, and can deceive by wonder-working. Ill-starred (*kakodaimones*) people, with their help, prepare philtres and love-charms. For all self-indulgence and hope of

riches and fame comes from them, and especially deceit, for lies belong to (*oikeion*) them. [2] They want to be gods, and the power that rules them wants to be thought the greatest god. [3] It is they who rejoice in the 'drink offerings and smoking meat [Homer *Iliad* 9.500]' on which their pneumatic part grows fat, for it lives on vapours and exhalations, in a complex fashion and from complex sources, and it draws power from the smoke that rises from blood and flesh.

[43,1] So an intelligent, temperate man will be wary of making sacrifices through which he will draw such beings to himself. He will work to purify his soul in every way, for they do not attack a pure soul, because it is unlike them. [2] If it is necessary for cities to appease even these beings, that is nothing to do with us. In cities, riches and external and corporeal things are thought to be good and their opposites bad, and the soul is the least of their concerns. [3] But we, as far as possible, shall not need what those beings provide, but we make every effort, drawing on the soul and on external things, to become like (*homoiousthai,* cf. *Theaetetus* 176B, *Republic* 613B) God and those who accompany him – and this happens through freedom from emotion (*apatheia*), through carefully articulated concepts about what really is, and through a life which is directed to them – and [we make every effort] to become unlike wicked people and daemons and anything else that delights in things mortal and material. [4] So we too shall sacrifice, in accordance with what Theophrastus said. The theologians agreed with this, knowing that the more we neglect the removal (*exairesis*) of emotions from the soul, the more we are linked to the evil power, and it will be necessary to appease that too. [5] For as the theologians say, those who are bound by external things and are not yet in control of emotions must avert that power too, for if they do not, their troubles will not cease. GC

(6) Porphyry *Letter to Anebo ap.* Augustinum *City of God* 10.11 Dombart and Kalb *CCL* 47, lines 1-41 (= Porphyry *Letter to Anebo* pp. 3-8 Sodano)

Wiser was that man Porphyry in his letter to the Egyptian Anebo, in which in the guise of someone seeking advice, he uncovers and overturns the sacrilegious arts. And there indeed he repudiates all daemons and says that in their folly they are attracted by humid vapours and therefore do not live in the aether but in the sublunar air and even in the lunar globe itself. But yet he does not dare to attribute all fallacies, malicious acts and absurdities, at which he rightly takes offence, to all of the daemons. For some of them he, too, like others, calls benign, although he also thinks them to be generally foolish. He is amazed that the gods should not only be attracted by sacrifices but that it should be possible to compel and force them to do what human beings want and he wonders how, if gods are distinguished from daemons by corporeality and incorporeality, it is to be thought that the sun, the moon and the other visible objects in the heavens are gods, although he does not doubt that they are corporeal; and how, if

they are gods, some can be called benefactors, others evildoers; and how, though being corporeal, they can be joined with incorporeal beings.

[17] He also asks, as if in doubt, whether in diviners and miracle workers there are emotions of the soul or whether some spirits come from outside to enable them; and he conjectures that they rather come from outside, because upon the application of stones and herbs they hold people down, open closed doors or do similar miraculous things. For that reason, he says, some people believe that there exists a special kind of beings, whose function it is to hear prayer, but who are naturally deceitful, capable of assuming any form and many ways of behaving, mimicking gods and daemons and the souls of the deceased; and that it is they who cause everything which appears good or evil. But concerning what is truly good, however, they do not help; indeed they do not even recognise it. They give bad advice instead, make false accusations, and often obstruct those who eagerly follow the path of virtue. They are also full of heedlessness and arrogance, take delight in sacrificial odours, and are taken by flattery. Porphyry does not confirm as settled for him these and other reports of this kind of false and wicked spirit, who enter human souls from the outside and delude human senses whether asleep or awake. Rather he expresses suspicion and doubt so gently as to assert that others believe these things. Obviously that great philosopher found it difficult to recognise or confidently denounce the whole diabolical society, or to argue confidently against beings, whom no Christian granny would doubt existed, but would most readily execrate. Maybe he shrinks from offending Anebo, his addressee, as being the most illustrious high priest of such cults, and other admirers of such works allegedly divine and pertaining to the worship of the gods. JL

(7) Proclus *On the Existence of Evils* 17.8-27 Boese

On the other hand, if they change, they do not belong to the beings that are daemons in essence, but to beings that are such by relation: for the latter may be both better and worse, and that is another kind of life. All daemons, however, always fulfil the function of daemons, and each of them always <remains> in its own rank. However, to say they are good in themselves but evil for others because they lead them to something worse, would be just as if one called some schoolmasters and pedagogues mischievous because, having been appointed to chastise wrongdoings, they do not allow those who make mistakes to have a better position than they deserve. Or it would be as if one called evil those who stand in front of temples and stop every defiled person outside the precinct because they will not allow them to participate in the rites taking place inside. For it would not be evil that those who deserve it remain outside, but rather to deserve such a position and such prohibitions. Therefore, if some of the daemons that exist in the world lead souls upward and other daemons keep souls that are not yet able to ascend in their own habits of life, none of those daemons can rightly

be called evil, neither those who detach the soul from this realm nor those who detain them here. For there must also exist daemons to detain in the earthly realm the defiled man who is unworthy of travelling to heaven. Thus, not even in these daemons does reason seem to find evil; for each of them does what it does according to its own nature, always in the same manner; this is not evil. CS, JO

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18(g) Divination

Plato *Timaeus* 71A-72C made divination through dreams depend on images (*phantasmata*), as opposed to reason, although the images needed subsequent interpretation by reason. Aristotle gave an opposite, rationalistic account in *On Divination through Sleep*. Sleep gives us the quiet needed to recognise neglected symptoms of imminent disease in our bodies. The Neoplatonist interpretations tend to side with Plato and give imagination a big role in divination.

As regards the use of animals in divination, Porphyry opposes the killing of animals to facilitate divination through inspecting the entrails, or eating them. The philosopher does not need divination, or if he does, will be alerted by good daemons. Prophecy requires a vegetarian diet. Iamblichus claims after all to agree. He cites with approval Pythagoras' view that meat impedes divination. The techniques involving animals do not depend on their physical character, he says, but on the animal soul being intermediate between us and the daemons.

But Iamblichus thinks that true prophecy depends on divine light illuminating our soul vehicles, *Myst.* 3.14, 132,9-15, translated under **2(g)** above, whereas practitioners of physical divination depend on physical effluences (*aporroiai*), *Myst.* 3.28-9, 169,9-172,12.

(1) Porphyry *Abstinence* 2.50.1-2

Priests and diviners (*hieroskopoi*) of religion in this world instruct themselves and others to stay clear of tombs, of sacrilegious men, menstruating women, sexual intercourse, any shameful or lamentable sight, anything heard which arouses emotion; for often something that disturbs the diviner comes from the presence of unclean people, and that is why they say that sacrifice at the wrong time brings more harm than good. Shall the priest of

the father allow himself to become a tomb for dead bodies, full of contamination, when he wants to converse with the greater? [2] It is enough to have contact with some aspects of death in the taking of crops for our life here.' GC

(2) Porphyry *Abstinence* 2.52

Those whose life is tossed about in the external world we leave, when once they have been impious towards themselves, to be carried wherever they are carried. [2] But we say with good reason that the philosopher whom we describe, who is detached from external things, will not importune the daemons or be in need of diviners or the entrails of animals, for he has practised detachment from the things with which divination is concerned. [3] He does not stoop to marriage, so as to importune the diviner about marriage, or to trade; he does not ask about a slave, or about promotion and the other kinds of human fame. What he does seek no diviner or entrails of animals will show him clearly. [4] Himself through himself, as we say, approaching the god, who is established in his true entrails, he will receive instructions for eternal life, for all of him has flowed together there, and he will pray to be 'intimate of great Zeus', not of a diviner. GC

(3) Porphyry *Abstinence* 2.53.1-3

If some necessity presses hard, there are good daemons who run before a man who lives like this, the house-slave of the god, and will tell him through dreams and tokens and voices what will happen and what it is necessary to guard against. One must only abstain from evil, and acknowledge as a friend and companion that which is most honoured in all and everything that is good in the universe. [2] But vice and ignorance of the divine are fearfully ready to despise and mock what they do not know, since nature does not shout it aloud in words which can be heard, but, being of the intellect, she initiates by the intellect those who revere her. [3] And even if one accepts the practice of sacrifice for the sake of foreknowing of the future, it does not follow that one must necessarily accept the eating of flesh, just as any kind of sacrifice to gods or daemons need not entail eating. History, not only that recorded by Theophrastus but much else besides, has handed down the memory of how in ancient times they sacrificed people, and that does not mean that people should be eaten. GC

(4) Iamblichus *Pythagorean Life* 24,106

He [Pythagoras] recommended precautions against foods which impeded divination in relation either to purity and holiness of the spirit or to the maintenance of temperance and virtue. GC

(5) Iamblichus *Myst.* 6.4, 244,19-245,4 Des Places

Complete foreknowledge could not happen through experience (*pathos*); for it is that which is most unvarying, immaterial, and pure in all respects, that especially attains the future, whereas that which is mixed with the irrationality and darkness of the corporeal and material is filled with great lack of knowledge. GC

(6) Iamblichus *Myst.* 6.3, 243,2-244,6 Des Places

In interpreting specifically the workings of divination (*mantikon*) through sacred animals, such as falcons, we say that the gods are never present in the use of the bodies which are treated like this. They do not supervise (*proistasthai*) individual animals, whether partially or in close contact, materially or in some relationship. Such contact with the instruments of divination should be ascribed to daemons, and daemons that are very much divided and have been allotted their various animals. They are directly in control of this supervision (*prostasia*), and the appropriate rule which has been allocated to them is not completely self-sufficient or immaterial. Or you might want to put it like this: suppose they have been assigned a location through which they are such as to associate (*homilein*) with humans and make use of them. This location too must be reckoned pure from bodies, for there is no community (*koinônia*) between the pure and its opposite, but there is a reason why it is connected to people through the soul of animals. That soul has an attachment (*oikeiotês*) to people because it has the same principle of life, and with daemons because it somehow survives separate when it is liberated from bodies. So, being intermediate to both, it serves the one who supervises, and reports to those still held by the body the instructions of their governor, and gives them both a shared bond with one another. GC

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Most commentaries are contained in the series *Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca* (= *CAG*), ed. H. Diels, Berlin.

Abst. = *de Abstinentia*
Cael. = *de Caelo*
Cat. = *Categories*
Comm. Not. = *de communibus notitiis*
Cons. = *Consolation of Philosophy*
DA = *de Anima*
de An. et Res. = *de Anima et Resurrectione*
de Dec. Dub. = *de decem dubitationibus*
de Hom. Opif. = *de Hominis Opificio*
EN = *Nicomachean Ethics*
Enarr. in Psalmos = *Enarratio in Psalmos*
ET = *Elements of Theology*
GC = *de Generatione et Corruptione*
Gen. Lit. = *de Genesi ad Litteram*
HA = *On the History of Animals*
in Alc. 1 = *Commentary on Plato's First Alcibiades*
in An. Post. = *Commentary on Aristotle's Posterior Analytics*
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in Remp. = *Commentary on Plato's Republic*
in Sens. = *Commentary on Aristotle's de Sensu*
in Somn. Scip. = *in Somnium Scipionis*
in Tim. = *Commentary on Plato's Timaeus*
in Top. = *Commentary on Aristotle's Topics*
Isag. = *(Isagoge) Introduction*
Lib. Arb. = *de libero arbitrio*

Lives = *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*
Mant. = *Mantissa*
Math. = *Adversus Mathematicos*
Metaph. = *Metaphysics*
Mixt. = *de Mixtione*
Myst. = *de Mysteriis*
Opif. = *de opificio mundi*
PA = *On the Parts of Animals*
PH = *Hypotyposes Pyrrhonenses (Outlines of Pyrrhonism)*
PHP = *Galen, de Placitis Hippocratis et Platonis*, ed. P. de Lacy, *Corpus Medicorum Graecorum* V.4.1-2, Berlin 1978
Phys. = *Physics*
Polit. = *Statesman*
Princ. = *On First Principles*
Prov. = *de Providentia*
PT = *Platonic Theology*
QAM = *Quod animi mores*
Quaest. = *Quaestiones*
Rep. = *Republic*
Rhet. = *Rhetoric*
St. Rep. = *de Stoicorum Repugnantiis*
Strom. = *Stromateis*
Symp. = *Symposium*
Theaet. = *Theaetetus*
Tim. = *Timaeus*
Trin. = *On the Trinity*

ANRW = *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*
CCAA= *Corpus commentariorum Averrois in Aristotelem*
CCL = *Corpus Christianorium Series Latina*
CLCAG = *Corpus Latinum Commentariorum in Aristotelem Graecorum*
CMAG = *Catalogue des manuscrits alchimiques grecs*
CSEL = *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*
Dox. Gr. = H. Diels, *Doxographi Graeci*, Berlin 1879, Berlin and Leipzig 1929
FHS&G = William Fortenbaugh, Pamela Huby, Robert Sharples, Dimitri Gutas, *Theophrastus of Eresus: Sources*, Parts 1 and 2, Leiden 1992
GCS = *Die griechischen christlichen Schriftstellen*
LS = A.A. Long, D.N. Sedley, *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, vol. 1, Cambridge 1987
OSAP = *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*
OCT = *Oxford Classical Text*
PG = Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*
PL = Migne, *Patrologia Latina*
SVF = H. von Arnim, *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*, Leipzig 1903-5

< > Angle brackets indicate an addition proposed to the original text.
[ ] Square brackets are used for explanatory additions to the translation which are not in the original.
Inverted commas around an author's name or a question mark after an author's name indicate some uncertainty about the attribution to that author.

Main Thinkers Represented in the Sourcebook

For biographical detail, see Richard Goulet, *Dictionnaire des philosophes antiques*, CNRS Paris (up to the letter J in 2000).

Abû Bishr Mattâ, Arabic translator *c.* 900 AD
Aidesius of Cappadocia, pupil of Iamblichus *c.* 280/290 – *c.* 355 AD
Albert the Great, teacher of Thomas Aquinas, 13th cent. AD
Alcinous, Middle Platonist, mid-2nd cent. AD
Alcmaeon, Presocratic philosopher, born *c.* 500 BC?
Alexander of Aphrodisias, leading commentator in the Aristotelian school, fl. *c.* 205 AD
Amelius, student of Plotinus in 3rd cent. AD
Ammonius, son of Hermeias, pupil of Proclus and head of Alexandrian Neoplatonist School, *c.* 435/45-517/26 AD
Ammonius Saccas, teacher of Plotinus in 3rd cent AD
Andronicus of Rhodes, Aristotelian editor of Aristotle, 1st cent BC
Antipater of Tarsus, head of Stoic School *c.* 152 – *c.* 129 BC
Antoninus, pupil, like Plotinus, of Ammonius Saccas, 3rd cent. AD
Apollonius of Perga, astronomer, *c.* 200 BC
Apollonius of Tyana, neo-Pythagorean, 1st cent. AD
Apuleius, Middle Platonist, Latin author of *The Golden Ass*, born *c.* 123 AD
Archedemus of Tarsus, founder of Stoic school in Babylon, *c.* 145 BC
Archimedes, mathematician and inventor, *c.* 287-212/211 BC
Archytas, Pythagorean friend of Plato, first half of 4th cent. BC
[pseudo]-Archytas, neo-Pythagorean, author of a *Categories* purporting to pre-date Aristotle's, second half of 1st cent. AD
Aristarchus of Samos, pupil of Strato, propounded heliocentric hypothesis, observed summer solstice in 280 BC
Aristotle, 384-322 BC
Aristotheros, had controversy on astronomy with Autolycus, 4th cent. BC
Asclepius, Neoplatonist pupil of Ammonius, son of Hermeias, in 6th cent. AD
Aspasius, Aristotelian, 2nd cent. AD
Athenagoras, Alexandrian Church Father, late 2nd cent. AD, taught Clement
Athenodorus, probably the Stoic teacher of the Emperor Augustus, 1st cent. BC
Atticus, Middle Platonist, fl. *c.* 176-180 AD
Augustine, St, Bishop of Hippo, 354-430 AD
Autolycus of Pitane, astronomer, 4th cent. BC
Averroes, Islamic philosopher, *c.* 1126 – *c.* 1198 AD
Avicenna, Islamic philosopher, *c.* 980-1037 AD
Bacon, Roger, 1214/20-1292 AD
Basil of Caesarea, Cappadocian bishop, brother of Gregory of Nyssa, *c.* 330-379 AD
Boethius, Christian Neoplatonist, provided Neoplatonising commentaries in

Latin on Aristotle's logic, author of *The Consolation of Philosophy*, *c.* 480 – *c.* 525 AD
Boethus of Sidon, Aristotelian pupil of Andronicus, 1st cent. BC
Bonaventure, St, *c.* 1217-1274 AD
Calcidius, Christian commentator in Latin on Plato's *Timaeus*, 4th-5th cent. AD
Callippus, astronomer associate of Aristotle, refined the theories of Eudoxus, 4th cent. BC
Chaldaean Oracles, text of *c.* 200 AD, first commented on by Porphyry
Chrysippus, leading Stoic, 3rd head of School between *c.* 232 and *c.* 206 BC
Claudianus Mamertus, Christian writer in Latin, influenced by Porphyry, died *c.* 474 AD
Cleanthes, 2nd head of Stoic School, died *c.* 232 BC
Clement of Alexandria, head of Christian School in Alexandria, 150-215 AD
Cleomedes, Stoic following Posidonius, between 0 and 150 AD
Cornutus, Stoic, 1st cent. AD
Damascius, last head of Athenian Neoplatonist school, closed 529 AD
David, Christian commentator on Aristotle's logic, late 6th cent. AD
Democritus, Presocratic philosopher, fl. *c.* 435 BC
Democritus Chnous, Platonist, 3rd cent. AD
Dexippus, Neoplatonist pupil of Iamblichus, 4th cent. AD
Diodorus Cronus, dialectician, died *c.* 284 BC
Diogenes of Babylon, head of Stoic School, died *c.* 152 BC
[pseudo]-Dionysius, passed off paraphrases of Proclus as early Christian mystical documents, around start of 6th cent. AD
Dousareios, Egyptian priest mentioned by Ammonius
Elias, Christian commentator on Aristotle's logic, late 6th cent. AD
Epictetus, Stoic, between *c.* 50 and *c.* 125 AD
Epicurus, founded his School in Athens *c.* 307 BC, died 271 BC
Epiphanius, *c.* 315-403, considered philosophy to be heresy, and excerpted Methodius' arguments against Origen.
Euclid, mathematician, author of the *Elements*, between 325 and 250 BC
Eudoxus, astronomer colleague of Plato, 4th cent. BC
Eudemus, pupil of Aristotle, late 4th cent. BC
Eusebius, Church historian, *c.* 263-339 AD
Eustratius, commentator on Aristotle, 1050/1060 – *c.*1120 AD
Evagrius, 4th cent. AD desert Father
Farabi, Islamic philosopher, *c.* 873-950 AD
Galen, doctor and eclectic philosopher, *c.* 129-199 AD
Ghazâlî, Islamic philosopher 1058-1105 AD
Gorgias, orator, sophist of 5th cent. AD, subject of Plato's *Gorgias*
Gregory of Nyssa, Cappadocian bishop, reader of Porphyry, brother of Basil of Caesarea, *c.* 335-394 AD
Grosseteste, Aristotelian scholar, early 13th cent AD
Heracleides of Pontus, Platonist, 4th cent. BC, turned to Aristotelian school
Heraclitus, Presocratic philosopher, wrote between 499 and 478 BC
Hermarchus, succeeded Epicurus, 271 BC
Hermeias, reproduced lectures on Plato *Phaedrus* by his teacher Syrianus in 5th cent. AD
Herminus, teacher of Alexander of Aphrodisias, 2nd cent. AD
Hermotimus, legendary shaman
Hero of Alexandria, pneumatologist, 1st cent. BC
Herophilus, discovered the nerves and ovaries, 3rd cent. BC

Hierocles, Alexandrian Neoplatonist, studied under Plutarch of Athens before 423 AD
Hierocles, Stoic ethicist, fl. *c.* 100 AD
Hipparchus, astronomer, 2nd cent. BC
Hippocrates of Cos, doctor, between 460 and 360 BC, around whose work there grew a corpus of 60 medical treatises.
Iamblichus of Apamea, rebellious pupil of Porphyry, reforming theological basis of Neoplatonism, *c.* 250 – before 325 AD
Jerome, translator of the Bible into Latin, correspondent of Augustine, *c.* 347-419/20 AD
Julian of Tralles, Aristotelian or Platonist of *c.* 100 AD, cited for astronomical opinions.
Julian, Emperor and follower of Iamblichus, tried and failed to restore paganism, 331-363 AD
Longinus, Neoplatonist fellow student of Plotinus, 3rd cent. AD
Lucius, Platonist critic of Aristotle's *Categories*, like Nicostratus
Lucretius, formulated Epicureanism in Latin verse, *c.* 94-55/51 BC
Macrobius, 5th-cent. populariser of Neoplatonism in Latin
Maimonides, Jewish philosopher, 1135-1204 AD
Manicheans, followers of Mani, heretics opposed by Augustine
Marcus Aurelius, Emperor, Stoic, 121-180 AD
Marinus, pupil and hagiographer of Proclus, late 5th cent. AD
Maximus of Ephesus, *c.* 320-372 AD, studied under Iamblichus' pupils
Methodius, bishop, opponent of Origen, perhaps start of 4th century AD
Metrodorus of Chios, Democritean atomist, 4th cent. BC
Michael of Ephesus, 12th-cent. commentator on Aristotle
Mnesarchus, joint head of Stoic School from 110 BC
Moderatus of Gades (Cadiz), neo-Pythagorean, early 1st cent. AD
Nemesius, bishop and cultivated source for pagan philosophy, late 4th cent. AD
Nicostratus, Platonist, critic of Aristotle's *Categories*, 2nd cent. AD
Olympiodorus, last pagan head of Alexandrian Neoplatonist School, 495/505 – after 565 AD
Origen, Christian utilising pagan philosophy, successor to Clement in Alexandria, *c.* 185-253/4 AD
Parmenides, Presocratic philosopher, born *c.* 515 BC
Philo of Alexandria, Jewish philosopher, 1st cent. AD
Philo, dialectician, pupil of Diodorus Cronus, early 3rd cent. BC
Philoponus, Christian Neoplatonist pupil of Ammonius, using pagan arguments to supplant pagan science, *c.* 490-570s AD
Philopator, Stoic opposed by Alexander, 2nd cent. AD
Plato, *c.* 427-348 BC
Plotinus, founder of Neoplatonism, *c.* 205-260 AD
Plutarch of Chaironeia, Middle Platonist, *c.* 46-120 AD
Plutarch of Athens, teacher of Syrianus and Proclus, died by 432 AD
Polemarchus of Cyzicus, astronomer pupil of Eudoxus, 4th cent. BC
Porphyry, pupil, biographer, and editor of Plotinus, critic of pagan and Christian religion, stabiliser of the tradition of commentary on Aristotle, 232-309 AD
Posidonius, Stoic, *c.* 135-51 BC
Priscian of Lydia, member of Athenian Neoplatonist school at closure in 529 AD
Proclus, head of Athenian Neoplatonist school, *c.* 411-485 AD
Ptolemy, astronomer, fl. between 146 and *c.* 170 AD
Pythagoras, 2nd half of 6th cent. BC
Sallustius, Neoplatonist, associate of Emperor Julian, 4th cent. AD

Seneca, Stoic, tutor to the tyrant Nero, *b.* 4-1 BC; *d.* 65 AD
Severus, Platonist of 2nd cent. AD
Sextus Empiricus, Pyrrhonian sceptic, late 2nd cent. AD
Simplicius, left Athenian school at closure in 529 AD, and thereafter wrote the most comprehensive commentaries extant
Sopater, pupil of Iamblichus
Sosigenes, teacher of Alexander of Aphrodisias, 2nd cent. AD
Stephanus, lectured on Aristotle in Byzantium and Alexandria around 600 AD
Strato, 3rd head of Aristotelian School, died *c.* 269 BC
Synesius, Christian Neoplatonist, bishop, *c.* 370-413 AD
Syrianus, Neoplatonist pupil of Plutarch of Athens, teacher of Proclus and Hermeias, died *c.* 437 AD
Taurus, Middle Platonist, fl. *c.* 145 AD
Themistius, rhetorician and commentator, with Platonist tendencies, though not belonging to the Neoplatonist school, fl. late 340s-384/5 AD
Theodore of Asine, pupil of Iamblichus, 4th cent. AD
Theodore of Mopsuestia, Christian disparaged by Philoponus, 352-428 AD
Theophrastus, succeeded Aristotle in 322, died 287 BC
Thomas Aquinas, St, author of *Summa Theologiae*, *c.* 1225-1274 AD
Ibn Tufayl, Islamic philosopher, died 1185 AD.
William of Moerbeke, 13th cent. AD, translated commentaries into Latin for Thomas Aquinas
Xenarchus, Aristotelian, end of 1st cent. BC
Xenocrates, became 3rd head of Plato's School in 339, died 314 BC
Xuthus, Pythagorean mentioned by Aristotle
Zeno of Citium, founder of Stoicism, *c.* 300 BC
Zeno of Elea, Presocratic author of paradoxes of motion, *b. c.* 490/485 BC

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132E-133C **4(e)(1)**
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647C-D **13(h)(4)**; 790D2-791B2 **6(a)(8)**
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86B7-C2 **6(a)(1)**; 92E4-93A7 **6(a)(2)**; 94C3-7 **6(a)(3)**

Republic
511D6-E2 **3(a)(1)**; 617E1-5 **14(c)(1)**
Theaetetus
186B-187A **1(a)(1)**; 184D **4(c)(1)**
Timaeus
28C3-5 **16(a)(1)**; 41D4-42A1 **8(a)(1)**; 43A6-7 **6(b)(7)**; 43A6-44C2 **6(a)(6)**; 67A7-B5 **6(a)(7)**; 77A3-C5 **11(f)(1)**
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5.3 [49] 5 (1-28) **4(a)(14)**; 5.3 [49] 5 (28-31; 42-4) **3(k)(9)**; 5.3 [49] 5 (42-48) **4(a)(15)**; 5.3 [49] 6 (39-43) **4(c)(20)**; 5.3 [49] 7 (1-9) **4(e)(6)**; 5.3 [49] 10 (25-44) **3(d)(9)**; 5.3 [49] 14 (1-8) **16(a)(5)**; 5.3 [49] 17 (28-31) **18(b)(16)**; 5.4 [7] 2 (44-8) **3(k)(10)**; 5.5 [32] 1 (37-9) **3(d)(4)**; 5.5 [32] 8 (3-7) **18(b)(15)**; 5.5 [32] 12 (14-15; 34-5) **13(f)(3)**; 5.6 [24] 1 (16-21) **4(a)(16)**; 5.7 [18] 2 (1-8) **6(c)(2)**; 5.8 [31] 1 (32-40) **2(l)(2)**; 5.8 [31] 2 (39-43) **4(e)(4)**; 5.8 [31] 4 (47-9) **3(d)(5)**; 5.8 [31] 5 (19)-6 (12) **3(d)(3)**; 5.8. [31] 9 (7-15) **2(b)(3)**; 5.8 [31] 10 (31-43) **15(b)(5)**; 5.9 [5] 5 (6-34) **3(k)(11)**; 5.9 [5] 5 (12-16; 26-8) **3(l)(4)**; 5.9 [5] 8 (3-4) **3(k)(12)**; 5.9 [5] 8 (11-15) **3(l)(5)**; 6.7 [38] 6 (1-7) **1(b)(2)**; 6.7 [38] 7 (8-16) **6(c)(6)**; 6.7 [38] 35 (23-6) **13(f)(2)**; 6.8 [39] 5 (30-2) **14(c)(2)**; 6.8 [39] 6 (1-45) **14(c)(3)**; 6.9 [9] 2 (35-6) **Introduction 13**, **4(e)(7)**; 6.9 [9] 3 (49-54) **16(a)(2)**; 6.9 [9] 4 (11-14) **16(a)(3)**; 6.9 [9] 5 (14-15) **3(k)(13)**; 6.9 [9] 7 (16-23) **15(b)(6)**; 6.9 [9] 11 (25-8) **16(a)(4)**

Plutarch of Chaeroneia

On the Face Appearing on the Orb of the Moon Cherniss, Loeb, *Moralia* 944E-945B **12(e)(6)**

Porphyry

Abstinence Bouffartigue, Patillon, Budé edition 1.32.1-2 **13(h)(1)**; 1.34.2 **13(h)(2)**; 1.35.1-2 **13(h)(3)**; 1.38.2 **17(g)(3)**; 1.46.2 **11(f)(4)**; 1.47.2 **11(f)(5)**; 2.24 (Theophrastus) **18(a)(1)**; 2.32.1 (Theophrastus) **11(g)(1)**; 2.33 **18(a)(2)**; 2.34.1-4 **18(a)(3)**; 2.37 **18(a)(4)**; 2.38 **18(f)(1)**; 2.39.1-3 **8(b)(13)**; 2.39.3-5 **18(f)(3)**; 2.40.3 **18(f)(4)**; 2.41 **18(f)(2)**; 2.42-3 **18(f)(5)**; 2.45 **18(a)(5)**; 2.50.1-2 **18(g)(1)**; 2.52 **18(g)(2)**; 2.53.1-3 **18(g)(3)**; 2.61 **18(a)(6)**; 3.3.4 **11(b)(1)**; 3.4.4 **11(b)(2)**; 3.4.7 **11(b)(3)**; 3.8.6 **6(a)(40)**; 3.19.2 **17(h)(1)**; 3.21.2 **11(f)(5)**; 3.25.3 (Theophrastus) **11(b)(4)**

de Regressu animae (Bidez, and the newer Porphyry frs of Smith) with Augustine's comments translated from Augustine *City of God* 10.9, 10.27, 10.29 Dombart and Kalb *CCL* 47 Bidez fr. 2 27,21-28,19, includes 290F Smith **2(g)(5)**, **18(b)(4)**; Bidez fr. 4 32,5-21, 287F Smith **18(b)(5)**; Bidez fr. 10 37,11-21, partly assigned to Porphyry in 297F Smith **18(b)(17)**

Life of Plotinus Henry, Schwyzer 18,10-11 **3(l)(1)**

On Ptolemy's Harmonics Düring 14,32-15,6 **1(b)(7)**

Summikta Zetemata ap. Nemesium *On the Nature of Man* 3 Morani (incorporated in H. Dörrie's ed. of the Porphyry), cf. Porphyry frs 259-261 Smith 38,20(or[Rist]42,22)-43,16 **6(b)(1)**

Sentences Lamberz 3 **6(b)(4)**; 12 **11(f)(7)**; 15 **2(f) narrative**; 16, p. 7,3-8 **1(b)(6)**; 18, p. 9,4-6 **6(a)(5)**; 22, p. 13,13-16 **3(h)(2)**; 27, p. 16,5-6; 11-13 **6(b)(5)**, **7(1)**; 29, p. 18,7-13 **2(h)(1)**; 31, p. 21,2 **6(b)(6)**; 32, p. 23,4-12 **17(a)(4)**; 32, pp. 24,9-25,6 **17(a)(6)**; 32, pp. 25,6-9 and 30,5-31,1 **13(c)(4)**; 32, pp. 27,7-29,7 **17(a)(8)**; 32, pp. 30,1-31,11 **17(a)(10)**; 40, p. 49,10-11 **4(f)(3)**; 41, pp. 52,7-53,5 **4(c)(18)**; 41, p. 52,11-16 **4(f)(4)**

Letter to Anebo (Sodano) translated from Eusebius *PE* 5.10, *GCS* 8 and Augustine *City of God* 10.11 Dombart and Kalb *CCL* 47 pp. 4-5 **18(a)(9)**; p. 17 **18(e)(4)**; pp. 18-20 **18(e)(5)**; pp. 3-8 **18(f)(6)**

Letter to Marcella Nauck 18, 286,3-13 **18(a)(7)**; 24, 289,17-24 **18(d)(1)**

To Gaurus (= Kalbfleisch, 'Galen', *Abhandlungen der Königl. Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin* 1895)
2,1-3 **11(f)(2)**; 6.1, 42,6-11 **2(h)(2)**
On the Styx, ap. Stobaeum 1 Wachsmuth (cf. Porphyry fr. 377F Smith)
423,3-6 **12(e)(8)**
ap. Iamblichum *DA* Stobaeus, Wachsmuth
1,365,7-17 **3(h)(1)**; 1,375,24-8 **11(d)(1)**; 1,381,2-23 **11(f)(3)**; 1,454,10-22 **18(b)(1)**; 1,458,12-14 **11(d)(2)**
Philosophy from Oracles in Augustine *City of God, CCL*
48,690-2
19.23 (Porphyry fr. 346F Smith) **18(a)(8)**

Posidonius
PHP De Lacy *Corpus Medicorum Graecorum* V4.1,2 (3 vols)
5.5.3-14 (= fr. 169,8-55 Edelstein and Kidd) **6(a)(24)**; 5.5.22-4 (= fr. 169,84-93 Edelstein and Kidd) **6(a)(25)**; 5.5.29-35 (= fr. 31(part) Edelstein and Kidd) **6(a)(26)**; 5.6.19-22 (= fr. 168 Edelstein and Kidd) **6(a)(27)**

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Metaphrasis in Theophrastum, CAG suppl. 1.2
2,26-3,9 **1(b)(13)**; 7,11-20 (Iamblichus) **1(b)(8)**; 19,9-13 **1(a)(8)**; 21,32-22,23 (Theophrastus) **4(c)(15)**; 23,13-18 (Iamblichus) **2(b)(4)**; 24,10-13 **2(f)(7)**; 26,5-7 **3(g)(23)**; 29,1-3 **3(m)(2)**
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49,19-34 **7(2)**

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211 **3(e)(12)**
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5,13-14 **15(a)(4)**; 11,11-17 **15(a)(5)**; 51,13-52,2 **18(d)(4)**; 52,10-53,2 **18(d)(5)**; 189,4-8 **3(f)(6)**; 192,1-4 **3(f)(7)**; 226,8-228,6 **13(d)(9)**; 226,12-227,2 **6(a)(47)**; 227,2-7 **3(e)(10)**
in Crat. Pasquali
sec. 51, 19,8-24 **2(l)(6)**; sec. 71, 30,8-32,17 **18(b)(14)**; sec. 71, 32,18-33,4 **18(b)(10)**; sec. 113, 65,16-26 **18(b)(11)**
in Eucl. 1 Friedlein
12,9-13,27 **2(i)(6)**; 16,8-10 **3(i)(5)**; 51,13-20 **2(d)(2)**; 51,20-52,20 **3(j)(4)**; 53,18-55,13 **2(i)(4)**; 121,2 **2(i)(7)**; 141,2-19 **2(f)(3)**, **4(c)(9)**
in Parm. Cousin for Greek, Klibansky for Moerbeke's Latin translation of Book VII
72,33-74,2 **3(d)(6)**; 807,24-808,24 **16(a)(14)**; 892,20-8 **3(i)(4)**; 927,18-29 **18(d)(6)**; 948,14-20 **3(e)(11)**, **3(l)(6)**; 957,28-958,11 **4(c)(10)**; 1073,26-30 **16(a)(9)**; 1108,19-29 **16(a)(16)**; 1226,38-1227,14 **12(d)(1)**; Book 7, p. 76 (Klibansky) **16(a)(12)**
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